

The book cover features a dense, ornate border in a dark olive-green color. This border is composed of intricate, swirling foliate patterns. Interspersed within these patterns are several heraldic shields and floral elements. On the left side, there are three shields: the top one has a red cross on a gold field, the middle one has a red lion passant guardant on a gold field, and the bottom one is a quartered shield with a red diagonal band and a red rose in the center. On the right side, there is a single shield with a red rose. Additionally, several red roses are scattered throughout the border, particularly in the top right, bottom left, and bottom right corners. The central area of the cover is a solid olive-green rectangle containing the title in a dark, serif font.

THE
DAWN OF
BRITISH
HISTORY



~~L. Halfoia.~~

P. MASLEN



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THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY



PREFACE

THIS volume is intended to follow "The Cave Boy" and "Days Before History" as a link in the chain which is designed to connect the present day with primitive times in Britain, when men and women were striving and suffering, with none to record the history that they made. If we would have our boys and girls realise the advantages of modern civilisation we must show them the comparison between primitive life and our own conditions, and every subsequent step in evolution is of importance if they are to know themselves and the race from which they have sprung.

In this attempt to provide a picture of life in Britain extending back to an age when nothing was recorded save by the tomb, I have, of course, taken risks. The material upon which my story is based is as authentic as possible, but I have been compelled to construct my fabric, reasoning from the known to the unknown, in order to provide a picture sufficiently vivid to appeal to the imagination of young readers.

Dr Thomas Hodgkin, in his "Political History of England," has given the following support to the exercise

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of reasonable conjecture in such a reconstruction as I have attempted :—

“ It is true ” (he says), “ that the conscious history of Britain, the history that was written by chroniclers and enshrined in libraries, begins, as do the histories of all the nations of Western Europe, with the day when they came first in contact with the Genius of Rome. But is it possible to avoid trying to peer a little further into the infinite, dim and misty ages that lie beyond that great historic landmark ? This is what our teachers of natural science have endeavoured to do on our behalf, labouring with the spade of the excavator and the collected specimens of the comparative anatomist to read a few of those pages of the history of Britain which had already been long illegible when Julius Caesar landed on our shores.”

Just as no history of Rome would be complete without an account of Romulus and the early kings, so a history of Britain would not be complete that did not give a suggestive picture of the heroic figures that played their part on the soil, slight though the materials to work from may be. Truth is the same, yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. Habits may change, customs pass away, but the verities of human character remain unaltered. Very little is known of Cassivelaunus, of Caractacus, of Boadicea and others who will figure in the pages of this story, but it is certain that they loved Britain beyond life, and we recognise in them kinship with the patriots of our later history.

Henri Martin, in his “ *Histoire de France*,” has given a suggestive account of the Druids, but here again, little is known of that mysterious priesthood. They did not commit their creed to writing ; all their instructions

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were given orally. We know, however, that frightful cruelties were practised by them; also that they possessed occult knowledge and were versed in the secrets of nature.

I need not, however, make further apologies for the uncertain foundation upon which I have been compelled to build, and it remains only for me to say that I have endeavoured to show the compelling causes of the emergence of our land from the barbarism of pre-Roman times—namely, the slow but steady conquest of intellect and discipline over disunited and unruly forces.

It is but a page torn out of the great epic of humanity, wherein we see man struggling out of the mire, reaching out of the chaos of cruelty and superstition, making one step forward towards the light.

A list of books consulted will be found at the end of the volume.

ALICE CORKRAN

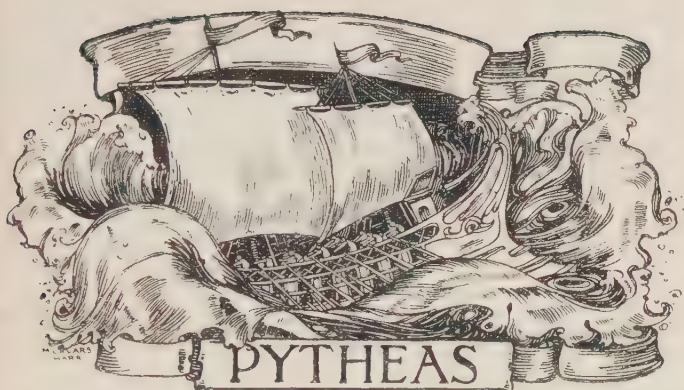


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LONG ago, hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, reports reached Greece of a tin-producing country beyond the land of the north wind. There were many stories connected with that mythical land, the people of which, it was said, worshipped Baal in a circular temple dedicated to the god, the sun never set over that land, and there the swans sang divinely. What was this strange land, this favoured country? They called it the Cassiterides, and said that it was in the North-west. Was it a legend of the midnight sun hovering over the horizon that had reached the Greeks? Were they tales of a northern people, brought back by travellers like Jason who had adventured wild journeys into the Arctic circle?

The manufacture of brass, a compound of tin and copper, was the most important art of the ancient world, and those who had the tin had, as it were, the world at their feet. The Phœnicians alone knew where to find it. They knew where the favoured islands were, but they kept the secret and, despite every effort, the

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Greeks could not wrest it from them. It was said that once a Phœnician merchant on his way to the land of tin was tracked by a Roman galley, and that rather than let the precious secret be known he had wrecked his vessel.

The Phœnicians' wealth was unparalleled because they had the secret of the whereabouts of that valued ore. They traversed the sea, their ships went everywhere. "Who are they that fly as a cloud and as doves to their windows?" asks Isaiah.

About the fourth century B.C. the exploits of Alexander the Great fired the ambition of his subjects, and the Greeks in the Greek colony of Marseilles determined to make a great effort to discover the land the Phœnicians were guarding so jealously. They had among them a man named Pytheas, who was a renowned astronomer and explorer. His exploits were more wonderful than those of Columbus, for without a compass, knowing nothing of the faithful Polar star, he was ready to set forth over the cruel seas through the dark nights to look for the tin-bearing land, the fabled Cassiterides. The Greek merchants of Marseilles fitted out a splendid ship, called a trireme, with high curling prow and stern; with beak to cut the waves. Near its prow was the fighting tower, and three rows of galley slaves, one above the other, helped to propel it.

Pytheas set forth to secure the precious metal that was so necessary to the making of weapons, without which civilised men could not efficiently rule the world.

I cannot tell you the details of the voyage of Pytheas, for the diary which he kept was lost. It was entitled "Commentaries concerning the Ocean." Poets and



Fisher folk had seen them like huge birds flying through the night

PYTHEAS

historians have quoted from its pages, but the original is lost. Pytheas, as I told you, had no compass to guide him, but he clove the sea with determined will, and with faith undimmed. He pushed on his perilous way, coasting Spain and Portugal, one thing he made sure of—the Cassiterides were not there. Then he coasted Gaul, hugging close the shore of Brittany. There he saw strange and terrible sights. He saw ivy-crowned women who worshipped the white moon-goddess, dancing like witches. He came to an island off Finisterre guarded by twelve virgins, who served a powerful oracle, and kept alight the sacred fire. They were cruel women, and slew those among them who were indolent, uttering fearful cries the while.

Still undaunted, Pytheas pushed on till he came to an island which he did not know was close to Cornwall, the land of tin for which he was searching. There dwelt nine women reputed to know all the secrets of heaven and earth, who quelled the waves of the ocean and the roar of the storm by their song. Their rhythmic and monotonous chants would rise above the screaming of the wind and the waves. People said they could transform themselves into the shape of any animal. Fisher folk had seen them like huge birds flying through the night. They revealed their lore only to the travellers who came to consult the oracle they served.

Pytheas by this time knew enough to know that there was an island called Ictis from which the precious metal was carried to Gaul. Where was Ictis? We are not certain even now; some say it was the Isle of Thanet, others the Isle of Wight, others again that it

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was St Michael's rock in Cornwall, the "Hoar rock in the woods."

Pytheas gathered that traders purchased the tin in Britain off the Cornish coast from natives who prepared the metal in ingots for the market. They carried it across the channel and unloaded it on the coast of Gaul, whence it was conveyed overland to the mouth of the Rhone.

During his sojourn in Britain he learnt strange things and saw strange sights. He saw the farmers gathering the corn, of which there was plenty, especially in the south-eastern provinces, and bringing it indoors. How gloomy were the skies of Britain after the sunny South. The threshing-floors were closed in, none were left open to the sky as at Marseilles. There rain was rare, but it was plentiful in Britain. He found likewise that the British farmers made a drink of wheat and honey; he saw them also make a drink from barley—this was the ancient beer.

Some say that he caught sight of the great circular temple—Stonehenge—but other historians declare that Pytheas never went near that marvellous temple of the dead where sun-worship was celebrated by the Druids.

From Britain Pytheas journeyed to Thule. Where was Thule—was it Iceland? It was somewhere in the Arctic region, where the sea was filled with floating ice. How strange and glorious were the sights he saw in that remote sea with its huge icebergs, and its multitude of birds winging their way to their breeding fields.

Turning south Pytheas came to the immense forests, in which he hoped to find amber, that sacred product which was buried with the dead in order that no evil should come nigh to the soul of the departed—was it a

PYTHEAS

product of the foam of the sea? Then he returned to Britain, landing at the extremest northern point. Later he sailed in his trireme down the Severn, that mighty river, where a tidal wave met him, and so alarmed the crew that they thought some god was angry with them.

After this, Pytheas returned to Marseilles, and we hear no more about him. Some say that he died on the journey, others that he lived on, preparing a learned work from notes that he had taken. We do not know more about him. He was a great man, great as an explorer, greater in courage, and in faith undaunted.



"Future warriors shall mark the place: and, shuddering, think of other years. They shall mark it, like the haunt of ghosts, pleasant and dreadful to the soul."—OSSIAN.



HAVE you ever been to Stonehenge? It was a holy place some four thousand years ago—think of it! Many of its pillars still rise sheer out of the grass, others lie in a confused heap; some stand in trilithons or groups, each of two pillars, with one stone lying horizontally upon their tops. Other blocks are isolated; each had then a name and a purpose. The mysterious ruin is grouped, a forest of huge stones, upon the loneliness of Salisbury Plain, and the wind passing through the ruined temple makes moan, as if some spirit in torment dwelt there.

There are stone circles at Avebury in Wiltshire, Drogheda in Ireland, and Carnac in Brittany, but none can compare in grandeur with Stonehenge. What was that wonderful temple—who built it? Its origin is shrouded in mystery. When Pytheas came to Britain it was in its glory. How were those blocks of solid stone transported to that solitary plain, whose immense landscape seems for them a fitting setting? The Picts were the monumental masons of antiquity. They have been called the Dolmen builders, and they are believed to have constructed the holy place. What

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their religion was we do not know, but we do know that they believed in the immortality of the soul.

The Picts were little brown men and women whose original home was Asia, and who, after travelling through Egypt, Spain and Gaul, came to Britain at some very early age. Wherever they established themselves the places thrived, for they understood agriculture. They were wonderfully clever, so clever that they inspired awe wherever they went. They were the conquering race, and the old inhabitants of Britain were driven before them to the recesses of the great forests and the mountains.

The Picts established themselves in communities. They lived in huts, the stone-covered floors of which were sunk two feet below the level of the ground, and were roughly roofed with branches, sods and grass. They lighted their fires on flat stones and the smoke escaped through a hole in the roof. Their sheep and cattle were herded in a circular space defended by a thorny hedge, for fear of wolves and bears. A small piece of ground round the huts was carefully tilled, and every square inch was dug up by the men and women with sharp-pointed stakes.

We know they had great reverence for the dead. The stone circles that are found everywhere were probably erected for their kings and their chieftains. We find them in Ireland, in Scotland, in all parts of England—alleys of standing stones leading to an underground chamber where the dead lay. The floor, the walls, the roof of the chamber were composed of gigantic stones roughly hewn. Sometimes they buried a chieftain in the middle of the circle, and over him they heaped a mighty mound of earth and stones. Their dead

STONEHENGE

were buried lying on their side, arms and legs bent till they touched the chin. There is at the British Museum a prehistoric man who was found lying on his side, his closed eyes facing the east. About him are the weapons and tools he used during his life, and a lump of red ochre with which he used to tint his cheeks and breast.

But we have wandered from Stonehenge, the mysteri-



Pottery and Flint Knives found
in grave of neolithic man, now
in British Museum

ous ruin about which are gathered three hundred barrows—as the mounds which marked the burial places are called. Many of them belong to the Celtic period. Some people believe that before it was a temple of the sun Stonehenge was a place of burial built by men who felt the majesty of death. There are the long barrows of the first inhabitants of Britain, there are the round barrows of the round-headed people of the Bronze Age. Certain it is, it was the burial ground for the chieftains of the Stone Age, for the kings, the heroes and the mighty men. Can you not imagine

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the procession through the surrounding country, over the hills and dales, as the tribesmen came carrying the body of their chieftain to lay it among the three hundred barrows gathered about Stonehenge? As they approached the temple rising gaunt against the sky they chanted weird dirges.

“ Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.

Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes
Each in its tether

Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
Cared-for till cock-crow.”

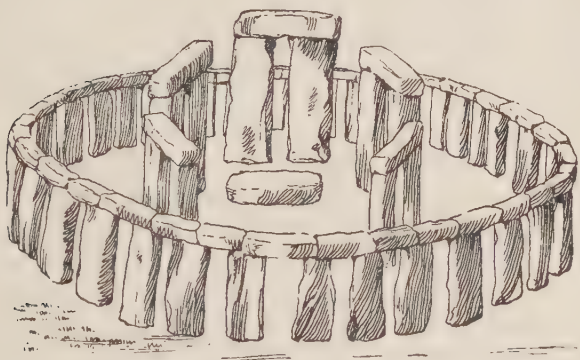
It is difficult to rebuild the vast temple that has stood on that plain for so many ages, but in the British Museum you will see a model of its reconstruction. It was a circular temple—we know the report of one had reached Greece—and it was said to be dedicated to the worship of the sun. It is debatable whether it was roofed in or open to the sky, or whether it was an immense graveyard before it became a temple. The mystery of the ages is upon Stonehenge and we cannot pierce it.

But how was it built, how did these immense blocks of stone find their way here? Was it built as the pyramids of Egypt were built? Was the stone carried, as it was dragged across the sandy desert by the unhappy Israelites, with the blocks attached to tree-trunks by ropes and leather hides? Thousands and thousands of lives were sacrificed in Egypt, but what mattered that? There were thousands more. So at Stonehenge the whip of the overseer was busy, the slaves were dragged or left to die on the way. How

STONEHENGE

many years were they building it? I cannot tell you. The outside circle was of hard sand-stone, placed in trilithons. In the centre of the temple was a blue block, the sacrificial stone of the Druids. Outside the circle, on the north-east, was the stone now known as the Friar's heel. As the priest stood at the altar on the dawn of Midsummer morning, he could see the sun rising above the top of this stone.

The far larger and older circle at Avebury, like the



Reconstruction of Stonehenge

outer circle of Stonehenge, is formed of Sarsen stones. The rustics firmly believe that these great sand-stones grew there, and the curious stones are still called "grey wethers" by the peasants because of their fancied resemblance to a flock of sheep. If Stonehenge is smaller it is the more finished in workmanship.

In the later Celtic period, on the longest and shortest days of the year, and also on the days of the equinox, cruel ceremonies were performed—terrible and

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awful rites which stained the ground with the blood of the victims, men, women and little children, and of animals, sacrificed in honour of the sun.

Years ago I went with some friends to Stonehenge, and two of us decided to spend the night there. It was not the 21st June, nevertheless we wanted to see the sun rise over the mighty pile. I stretched myself on one of the great blocks of stone and in silence we waited. It was so solemn, so solitary, the sky and the moonlight above us, with the tall pillars standing up against them, and the strange hum which I have already likened to the moan of a spirit in torment. I do not know if I was inspired by those influences or if it were a dream, but it seemed to me that I became aware of all that had happened in that place of awful memories. I saw the wild men coming down the hill bearing their chieftains to rest, a countless multitude, among whom were white-robed priests and priestesses. I saw the victims led to sacrifice, the little children, the white-horned bulls ; I saw them all, I seemed to feel the arms of the priest seizing and pinioning me to the sacrificial stone. Then I sat up in terror, a bar of silver was in the east, the great plain was sombre, but the ruin was catching the light of morning, and the birds were singing at heaven's gate. Had it been a dream, or did the stones retain something of the anguish of that past ? I hurried away from the sinister place, feeling that there was the stain of sin upon it. I was glad that day, the dear day with all its familiar delights, had come. I hailed the light.



WHO were the mysterious priesthood known as the Druids? They had the secrets of heaven and earth, they worshipped the moon, and the sun, who represented the Holy One. They foretold the future by the flight of birds and the inspection of victims offered up in sacrifice. They kept their lore secret, none of their doctrines were written down, all their teaching was oral. We are told that they were obeyed by kings, who served them in their palaces, where they sat on golden thrones. They were exempt from all civil and military duties. Some writers describe them as clad in scarlet and gold brocade, with golden collars and bracelets, but it is more usual to think of the high priest as wearing an oaken garland, surmounted by a tiara of gold, and dressed in white. The chief Druid bore the sceptre, others carried the crescent, the egg and other sacred symbols. The people thought that the gods spoke through their priests.

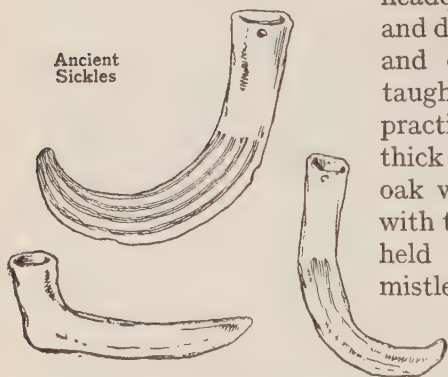
The Druids believed in human sacrifice and that by human sacrifice the State had been saved; the crops, they said, were fertile in proportion to the harvest of death.

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They held that by the sacrifice only of another life could a man's life be redeemed and the wrath of the gods be appeased. They would devote a man to the gods and kill him with the sword, gathering omens from the manner of his fall, and from the flow of his blood. Some victims were burnt in huge wicker frames to which the chief priest officiating would apply the torch.

Mona, the beautiful island of Anglesea, was the

Ancient
Sickles



headquarters of the Druids, and disciples came from Gaul and other countries to be taught by them. There they practised their awful rites in thick oak groves — for the oak was the tree associated with their cult. Nothing was held more sacred than the mistletoe and the oak on which it grew. They taught that the former was actually sent from

heaven and that it was an “all-heal.” No disease could resist the beneficent influence of the mistletoe found on the branches of the oak. It was held to be a sign that God was there.

The service of the mistletoe took place at the beginning of the month. The chief Druid, wearing a garland of oak leaves, climbed the tree and cut the mysterious plant with a golden sickle shaped like the new moon, two Druids below caught it in a long white cloth ere it fell. The assembly thereupon burst into prayer and the holy mistletoe was carried home in a waggon drawn by two snow-white bulls.

THE DRUIDS

We know little of the creed of the Druids ; like their teaching it was shrouded in mystery, but we know that, like the Picts, they believed in the immortality of the soul. They believed that when the soul left the body at death it passed at once into another body, and that, ere it was absorbed in the eternal life, it had a whole cycle of earthly lives to pass through.

“ Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath elsewhere had its setting,
And cometh from afar.”

This doctrine they celebrated on the first day of November. It was their holy festival, the sacred day of the year. The Druids thus held the Pythagorean doctrine that regards death as an interlude between two terms of life. The soul, they taught, whether in this world or elsewhere, finds another human body and leads another human life.

There were three orders of Druids : the ovates, dressed in green, the colour of nature, who knew the strange lore about plants and beasts ; they were the medicine-men, and amongst them were the augurs, who based their predictions upon the flight of birds. Then there were the bards, clad in long blue raiment, who prophesied victory or defeat. Their office, too, was to sing in heroic verse the gallant actions of illustrious men. Long after the order of the Druids was extinct and their religious faith forgotten the bards continued to flourish. Every chief had his own bard, who was considered as an officer of much importance.

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They were also the ambassadors between contending chiefs, and their persons were held sacred. Ossian sings : " Cairbar feared to stretch his sword to the bards, though his soul was dark. Loose the bards, said his brother Cathmor, they are the sons of other times. Their voice shall be heard in other ages when the kings of Temora have failed."

To die unlamented by a bard was a misfortune so great as to disturb the ghosts of those unlucky departed ones. " They wander in thick mist beside the reedy lake ; but never shall they rise, without the song, to the dwelling of winds."

We find the Druidical order throughout the world enjoying absolute power. We find it in Asia Minor, where the god worshipped was Zeus, and his worship was in a sacred oak grove. We find it in Prussia, where there was a place of great holiness called Romove, in which stood a high and mighty oak in the meadow dedicated to Perkunos, the god of thunder and rain and of the mountain-tops, to whom human victims were offered. This god was the giver of health and the helper of those who suffered from disease. The ashes of the perpetual fire kept up before the sacred oak were held sacred, and any priest who allowed the flame to expire was put to death.

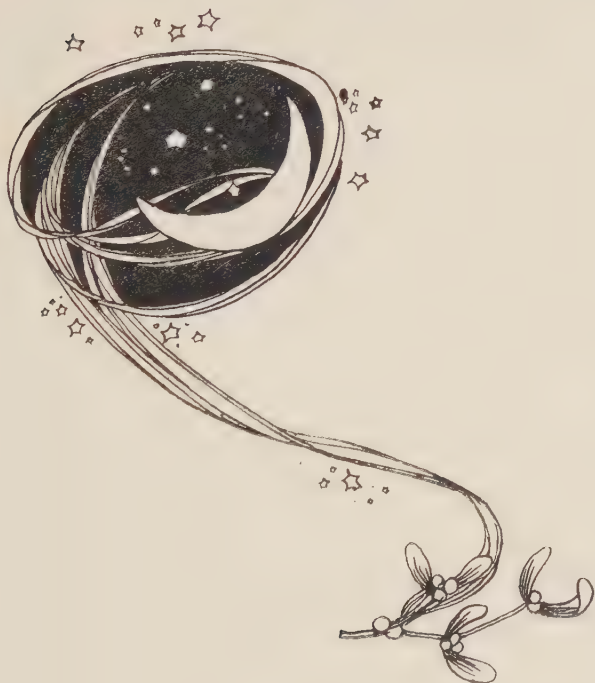
In Gaul, in Britain, and especially in Ireland, Druids were considered to be magicians. The rustling of the wind in the leaves of the sacred oaks, the voices of the doves and the bubbling of the spring near them were held to be oracular. Cuchulain, the Irish hero, used to remember amongst his advantages that he had been taught by Cathbad, the Druid.

The Druids boasted that they could bring about

THE DRUIDS

atmospheric changes, heavy snowstorms, the palpable darkness of a great tempest.

The Druidesses were not necessarily wives of the Druids. They were women who studied the secrets of nature, who practised strange rites, and who worshipped the sun and especially the "white-horned moon."



" . . . Yonder in that wasteful wilderness
Huge monsters haunt, and many dangers dwell ;
Dragons and minotaurs, and feendes of hell,
And many wilde woodmen which robbe and rend
All travelers."—SPENSER.



THE bulk of the surface of Britain, the isle of "blowing woodland," was covered by forest and marsh. One forest stretched in an unbroken mass for a hundred and twenty miles, from Hampshire to the valley of the Medway. There was the great Anderida Forest close to Pevensey, linked by a line of thickets along the shore of Southampton Water to the forests of the west. To-day we see a fragment of it in the New Forest. The forest of Wyre extended northward to Cheshire; and the Avon skirted the border of a mighty woodland which all but covered the present Warwickshire. The rises of Hampstead and Highgate formed the southern edge of the forest which stretched without a break to the Wash. Sherwood Forest and Needwood filled the space between the Peak and the Trent, the valley of York between the moorland of Pickering, and on to the desert between the Peak of Derbyshire and the Roman Wall. Beyond that the country was little more than a vast wilderness of moorland, later known as the Forest of Selkirk.

The downs of Britain gave form and character

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

to the scenery of the south. Then came the dreary waste over which the wolves and bears roamed; beavers haunted the streams; wild bulls wandered from forest to forest. There were venomous serpents in the vast fens along the eastern coast; winged insects rose above the brilliant vegetation; there were herons watching by the scattered waters of rivers. The whole island was covered with a bright mantle of green. The woods were resonant with song, and with the whir of wings, but the harmony was frequently marred by the terrified cries of the birds as the eagle, the vulture, the hawk swooped down upon them.

Many people came from over the seas and settled in Britain. The Picts were small and brown, and the Celts, who came later and dispossessed them, asserted that they had emerged from the dark, mysterious West. The Celts were tall, pale and light-haired. They had come, they said, from the land of the rising sun. They made their first appearance in Gaul.

We have seen in accounts of the Stone Age¹ how the men were without horses, how they were clad in the skins of beasts, how they dwelt in caves and had the ground for their bed, how they hunted and fought with bow and arrow, spear and axe. We have seen that later men used the delicate leaf-shaped arrow-heads, they made pottery, later still they made enamels, they used horn or polished stone, they built for themselves habitations.

The ancient Britons were very like the Esquimaux, with mild and regular features. In those early days,

¹ "Days Before History," H. R. Hall; "The Cave Boy of the Age of Stone," Margaret A. M'Intyre (Harrap & Co.).

THE PEOPLE OF THE WOODS

centuries before Christ came, many of them lived in lake dwellings. What were lake dwellings? you ask. They were dwellings in the water. The people drove piles into the mud to the level of the water. There they made platforms of beams of wood upon which they built their huts. The floors were made of clay, the roofs were made of stones, laid one above the other, in shape like a beehive, covered with branches of trees. Some were supported by an upright pole placed in the centre of the interior. They were rain and wind proof. Many of the platforms were connected with the shore by a kind of bridge, and there was always the hollowed-out canoe to take the inhabitants to land.



Bronze Work-Box from a Woman's Grave

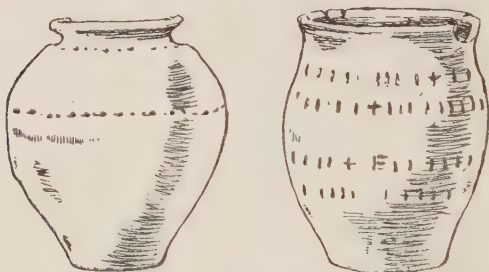
Others of the ancient Britons built huts in the woods. A cluster of them in a space cut out of the surrounding forest formed a village. Some were enclosed by a ditch for protection from attack of enemies. A hut larger than the rest would be built upon a hilltop with a stockade around it as a refuge in times of special peril. In the midst of the village rose the chief's hut, adorned with the skulls of his enemies nailed up on the porch with the skins of birds and beasts. They were always at war with each other, tribe with tribe. For the dwellers in one of the clusters of huts would make war with their neighbours who had settled in another part of the wood.

The women as a rule made the domestic pottery,

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

which they baked in the open fire, ornamenting it with designs of straight lines, herring-bone pattern, little squares and circles. The patterns did not vary greatly and they were impressed upon the wet clay, sometimes by a pointed instrument, sometimes by the fingers. The nails played a great part in working them out, small nails that were usually those of women.

We can picture these men and women in the heart



Celtic Pottery

of the wood, the men polishing their weapons, the women fashioning some article of pottery, or sewing with thongs of leather the clothes of the family. The children playing around them are growing up, the boys to be mighty hunters, great fighters, laborious workers, like their fathers, and the girls strong, industrious women like their mothers.

The clothing of men and women was very much alike. Sometimes it was made of skins, sometimes of cloth and of linen. It consisted of a blouse and trousers all in one, and later of a tartan plaid fastened at the shoulder with a brooch. The Gauls especially were experts at making

THE PEOPLE OF THE WOODS

cloth and linen, at dyeing in many colours, red being the favourite hue. √

The chief of a tribe was a surprising sight. His dress was flaming and fantastic. He wore a gorgeous tartan, his hair hung like a horse's mane, pushed forward over his forehead in a thick shock.

Both it and his moustache were dyed red. "For all the world they looked like the satyrs or like wild men of the woods," said Posidonius, a Greek philosopher and great traveller who came to Britain more than a century after Pytheas. It was a grand sight to see the chieftain driving his chariot, his brilliant cloak clasped by a fibula or brooch, his sword clanging, its bronze sheath gleaming like gold; the enamelled trappings (for the early Britons understood the art of enamelling) were true works of art.



Bronze Pins

His wife too was a splendid figure, with massive bracelets clasping her arms, her neck adorned with a magnificent necklace of amber and beads of glass, her dress decorated with a pair of golden disks, pins of bronze gleaming like gold in her hair.

It was from the Gauls chiefly that civilisation came. Posidonius gives us an amusing description of a feast held for him in Britain by some of the Gaulish chiefs.

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

Posidonius¹ was quite delighted with the simplicity of his hosts. He tells us that not until the feast was over was he asked the purpose of his journey. The guests, he says, sat on a carpet of rushes or on skins of dogs or wolves, not far from the pots and spits of the fireplace ; in front of them were little tables on which the bread was set in baskets. There was plenty of meat, both roast and boiled, of which they partook rather in the fashion of lions, for they would take up the joint and gnaw it. If a man could not get the meat off he would use his little bronze knife, which he kept in a separate sheath by the side of his sword and dagger.

Their drink was hydromel, a beverage composed of honey and water, and it was served in jars of earthenware which boys carried round, while the bards sang, accompanying themselves on the harp. As the company drank they bowed to the right in honour of their god. The guests sat in three rings—the nobles, the sheath-bearers and the javelin men. If they quarrelled about their helping of food, or any other matter of rights, they would get up and fight the question to the death. In more ancient times the strongest man would seize the joint and defy the company to mortal combat. If no duels occurred during the meal the guests were entertained with sword play, or sometimes they would derive amusement from seeing a man die. The man would bargain that a reward should be paid to his friends, and then he would lie down quite happily on his long shield and allow his throat to be cut or his body to be transfixed with a lance.

¹ Posidonius was a Greek traveller, philosopher and stoic (135-51 B.C.). Cicero was his pupil.



Posidonius entertained by Gaulish Chiefs

THE PEOPLE OF THE WOODS

We may read something of the history of that time from the Heathery Burn cave in the county Durham, which was discovered in 1859 by some quarrymen when moving a stone from a ravine. They found many skeletons in the cave, and it was evident that these were what remained of a family who had been drowned. How pathetic it is to think of their fate ! They were resting after the day's work was done, the little chil-



Amber Necklace

dren, the father and the mother, when the stream that ran through the cave rose, flooding their home.

They were evidently well-to-do people, for there were found bronze spear-heads and axes, bronze and gold pins, bracelets, a bronze cauldron, gold and bronze basins. In the British Museum you will see many of the things that were found in the cave, including a bronze bracelet that must have been worn by a little girl. As evidence of what people ate there was a great heap of the shells of mussels, cockles and limpets, and bones of sheep. The far-distant past

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

lives again when we see these skeletons, when we handle the ornaments that they wore, the weapons that they used. And this cave may be taken as an example of many of the abodes of that time. Other dwellings, as I told you, were built over the shallow water of the fens or the deeper water of lakes; many were built in the forests.

In many of the huts have been found implements for the dressing of skins, showing that leather was used for clothing the people. Buttons made of wood and bone, and especially of amber, were a favourite ornament. In Yorkshire jet necklaces were worn by the wealthier class of men and women. Many were of jet connected by beads of coloured glass, and especially by beads of amber. Amber was supposed to be a charm. No evil thing could approach the living who wore it, nor the dead on their journey to the other world.

“Precious was the amber and worth a banquet of wine,” sang a poet.

No wonder all sought to possess it. In the tombs it has been found in abundance. In one instance a necklace of a thousand beads was discovered; in a Sussex grave was found a cup carved from a solid block.

Expeditions were formed to search for amber. Tacitus tells us that it was found on the shores of the Suevi Sea, “that sea of marvel where the world came to an end.” The inhabitants of those shores bore the images of wild boars as a symbol of their faith in the Mother of the gods. They gathered the amber in rough lumps, carried it across Europe and got an amazing price for it. In the British Museum you will

THE PEOPLE OF THE WOODS

see many necklaces and beads of amber that belonged to folk of long ago.

Pins also were used for fastening the dress, or worn in the hair by the women. They were of bronze that glittered like gold. The disk ornaments worn by chieftains and their wives were of gold, coming, it was said, from Ireland, the rich land of antiquity.



Jet Ring and Button and Bone Beads

*" I have wandered where the cuckoo fills
The woodlands with her magic voice ;
I have wandered on the brows of hills
Where the last heavenward larks rejoice."*



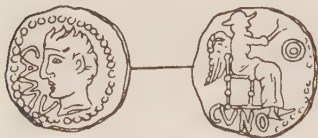
STRANGE were the beliefs of the people of the woods. First they had their priesthood, the mysterious Druids, who worshipped Per-kunos, the god of the oak, from whom they took their name—the men of the oak. The bards invoked Ogmios, the patron of poetry. But there were other gods: there was Mapon, the loved Mapon, the god of beauty, of health, of all things lovely; sometimes he was called Belarus, a sun god. There was the dread Toutates, better known as Camulus in Britain. He constantly occurs on coins surrounded by instruments of war, for he was the war god. Piles of spoils were heaped up for him in the market-places, and his altars ran with the blood of the captives. There was Tyrranus, who carried a mighty hammer like the Scandinavian Thor. There was Dunates, who presided over roads, markets and boundaries. He was the merchants' god. He and Belisama were the most human of all the gods. She, the great goddess, taught men the useful arts, how to labour, to spin and to weave, to work in the smithy, to sow seeds and till the ground.

Then there were the streams and their attendant nymphs. Sabrina Fair, whom Milton sang of "beneath

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

the translucent wave," and Bovinda, "in her palace by the clear running Boyne," were among the worshipped spirits of the streams. The brimming rivers brought food and abundance. They were dedicated to the mothers or guardian spirits, the mild-faced women with children and fruit in their laps.

The people also believed in the virtues of the plants. There was the dreadful mandrake that grew by the side of graves, yellow-leaved, which gave horrible shrieks when pulled out of the earth, and became an oracle to the one who possessed it. There



Coin showing Head of Toutates or
Camulus

was the Club Moss, now known as the Grace of God; to pluck which, the worshipper must be clad in white, with bare feet which he had washed in clear water. The moss

was pulled out of the earth, and no metal knife might be used to cut it.

Amongst other beliefs we must not forget the sacred fire of the hearth, the lustral fire kindled by a stick, which was made to ignite by rapidly twisting it in a bowl surrounded by dry leaves.

The people thought the pathless woods were the haunts of good and evil spirits; in dells, in caverns, in rocks they dwelt, these powers of beneficent or of malignant influence. They inhabited the lakes, the rivers, the mountain-tops, the woods. In every tree a spirit dwelt, and above all was a great god, the god of the forest.

All the air was filled with wonders. The stars were the eyes of the god, the flaming sun was the sign

THE BELIEFS OF THE PEOPLE

of his presence by day. The white-horned moon was called the measurer, the people counted their days and their months by its growth and its waning. She was a gloomy goddess; the Irish imagined her a lean bird, gloating over the bodies of the slain in battle. The comet was the sword of God. Would it fall upon the earth, would it destroy its inhabitants? Mothers seeing it clasped their little ones to their hearts. The falling stars were the gods fighting in the heaven above. "Look," said the children, pointing, as the stars darted across the sky, "the gods are angry."

When a great cloud shining like silver, or tinted with the colours of the sunset, was seen in the sky, the children said it was the palace of a fairy. Far away on the horizon the people pointed through the mist to the Islands of the Blest, or to the Earthly Paradise where all was calm and bright. Its inhabitants were of a divine race, they said.

The Irish had many stories concerning that land. They said it was inhabited by long-faced, yellow-haired heroes, by goddesses who were beautiful, with hair golden as the flower of broom. It was the city of eternal summer, an aerial city, a city of green pastures, a city to which all the souls of men and women would go and be happy and where they would rest at last :

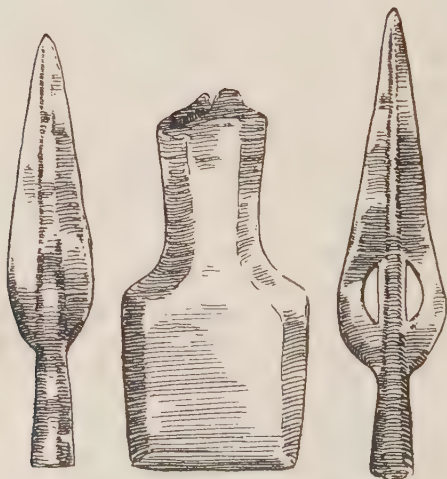
" A land of youth, a land of rest,
A land from sorrow free ;
It lies far off in the golden west
On the verge of the azure sea."

The people recognised the presence of God in the brightening sky. They used to propitiate the benignant influences, they sought to guard themselves against

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the evil ones. Among these were the witches, who foretold the future and who held converse with the Evil One, strange wild women who performed dark and mysterious rites. They were the enchanters who wielded forces no man could withstand.

These gods and goddesses, these nymphs, these wild creatures of the woods, were known throughout the ages, but not always by the same names. They always had the same attributes. The evil ones represented the terrors from which we shrink, the good ones the ideals towards which we aspire.



Spear-heads and Hammer from Ireland



THEN there are legends of the people of the woods. Every glen, every hill, every valley was peopled by the fancy of the grown-up children of those early times, and they had a tale to fit every rustle of the winds. There were the fairies small enough to enter into an ear of corn. There were those who flew about on magic horses, riding sometimes in cavalcades behind their kings and queens. They had many names for those sovereigns. Perhaps one was Dagda, King of the Fairies ; he was greater than the grey mist, his cauldron was the sky. Other names may possibly have come down to us in those of Queen Mab, King Oberon and Queen Titania.

Some parts of Connaught in Ireland were more thickly peopled with fairies than with men. There were the evil fairies, mischievous fairies, good fairies. There was one who all throughout England, Ireland and Scotland believed in. He did all sorts of drudgery for a draught of milk, but he also did a deal of mischief.

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We know him as Robin Goodfellow. There were dwarfs who peeped out of the earth or out of the trees, or came out of the old tombs or from under the foundations of the castles of long ago, little dwarfs with ragged coats that were not two inches long and were patched all over. They helped in the work of the household. They were good-natured tiny souls, and when the family were away they would warm themselves by the fire.

Then there were the giants, and mothers used to tell the following legend to their children. They said that Brut, who was grandson of Æneas, and who gave his name to Britain, was guided to the island by the words of a beautiful woman, who was queen of all the woods that ever were on earth. The Lady Diana she was called, and Brut entreated her to tell him where he and his people were to settle. And Diana told him of a land in the West surrounded by the sea where he and his people would prosper. Brut promised that when he reached that land he would build the Lady Diana a temple and place in it her image in red gold. He set forth and came to Spain, where dwelt Corineus, strong as a giant, who left his home and people to follow Brut. The mothers would tell how after many adventures the travellers reached Dartmoor by Totnes, where they found a land in which dwelt twenty giants, whose leader was Gogmagog, the tallest and most powerful of them all. One day Brut and his men were very merry feasting together when lo, over the surrounding hills, led by Gogmagog, came the twenty giants, with tall trees for clubs. There was little time for Brut and his followers to prepare to defend themselves, and so many were slain. But they took heart at last, turned upon the

THE LEGENDS

giants with their bows and arrows, and slew them all, save Gogmagog, their mighty leader.

“ Spare him,” cried Corineus, “ let me wrestle with him.” They all agreed with delight, and when the giant understood what was about :

“ Ha ! ha ! ” he said, “ you small mannikin. Would you wrestle with me ? ”

The people gathered round to see the contest, Brut sitting on a grassy down. The combatants faced each other upon a cliff. Corineus was not nearly so big as Gogmagog, but he was much above the common height of man. Presently they strove breast to breast ; they rammed their heads together ; they fell down ; then they rose again, red and enraged, hatred in their eyes, gnashing their teeth at one another. Each thought he would conquer by wiles or by his wondrous strength. And now, seeing an opening, Gogmagog seized Corineus, and putting forth all his might broke four of his opponent’s ribs. The spectators at this sent forth a groan, thinking that Corineus was spent. The next moment, to their great joy, he was up again, and gathering all his strength, in a supreme effort he seized Gogmagog with his mighty arms and broke his back. Then taking him by the girdle he dragged him to the edge of the cliff, whence the people saw him hurl his mighty antagonist into the sea below. They gave a tremendous cheer, and ever since, that cliff has been called Gogmagog’s Leap.

“ Oh ! ” the children would say, drawing in their breath. Then they would play at the giants fighting with each other.

If you go to the Guildhall in London you will see there the statues of two giants, called Gog and Magog,

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

but this is a mistake, for in reality they are the great Gogmagog and Corineus his adversary.

Another favourite legend was that of Wayland Smith, the smith of the gods. The people of the woods were never tired of telling it to their children. I must tell you they thought all smiths supernatural. In Berkshire, not far from the far-famed down of the White Horse, a monument built by them is still to be seen. They said Wayland Smith worked there and earned an honest penny when he came down from his high estate to labour among men. Wayland worked hard but was never seen. A traveller whose horse had cast a shoe would lay a penny on one of the stones, go away and leave the shoeless horse behind. Then he would come back and lo ! the penny was gone and the horse was shod. Poor Wayland Smith, smith of the gods, condemned to work for money ! The children of long ago would ask how Wayland Smith was enabled to get back to the land of the gods. He could only go back, said their mother, when some mortal was grateful to him for what he had done. After many years one was grateful for his services and for those done to others who needed his help, and so, to Wayland Smith's great joy, he was relieved from his task.

Another legend told of the winds, the mysterious winds. They were eight in number, and every wind had a different colour. The east wind was purple, the wind from the south was white, that from the north was black, that from the west was pale yellow. Then there was a red wind, a pale grey wind, a green wind, and a speckled. They blew over the ghostly lands and mountains, over the lakes and rivers, and over



M. LAVARS HARRY

He hurled his mighty antagonist into the sea

THE LEGENDS

the dark woods. They blew they knew not whence, and they knew not whither.

Besides the fairies, the dwarfs, and the giants, there were the idols whom men and women worshipped. Long years after, when St Patrick came to Ireland, he found one called Black Crom, made of gold, and round it were twelve idols of stone; this was believed to be the sun god.

Then there was Bride (the Christian Church afterwards named her St Bridget), whose symbol was a flame and whose worship was like that which was discovered by Pytheas in the island off Finisterre. Each of Bride's nineteen servants had charge of the sacred fire for a single night, but on the twentieth night the servant in attendance would say, "Bride, this night take care of your own fire for this night belongs to you."

"Crom was their Day god and their Thunderer,
Made morning and eclipse;
Bride was their Queen of song, and unto her
They played with fire-touched lips."

A terrible legend was that of the Sin Eater. The Sin Eaters were men and women who were very poor. They would come to the house where someone had just died and they would offer to eat his sins. You ask how they ate them. Well, the corpse was laid out, and on it was placed a loaf of bread, and the Sin Eater would take this and a cup of wine and a coin of money. The people thought that all the sins the dead man or woman had committed passed then into the body of the one who had eaten the bread, drunk

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

the wine, and pocketed the piece of money, and that the soul of the dead was freed.

These are some of the legends of the people of the woods, and they show something of the lively imagination of the simple folk who lived in these islands in far-distant times.





I HAVE told you of the legends of the people of the woods, and we have seen what an important part the fairies played in their lives. From some of these legends Shakespeare borrowed material for his plays. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for instance, is inspired by the popular tales of antics played by the little people. Oberon and Titania, the dearest of the fairy kings and queens, are quarrelling over a mortal child which the fairies have kidnapped. Titania is to sleep in a fairy bower where grow the wild thyme and sweet violets, under a canopy of woodbine, musk rose and eglantine. She gives orders to her attendant fairies how they are to employ themselves, and they sing in chorus as she falls asleep :

“ Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh:
So good-night—with lullaby ! ”

Oberon is in a great rage, so he consults Puck as to

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

what he shall do to punish the Queen. There is a herb called love-in-idleness, the juice of which, if smeared upon the eyelids of one asleep, will, when he wakes, cause him to dote upon the first living creature he sees. Oberon tells Puck to fetch him this herb, and Puck, nothing loth—for he revels in mischief—gets the flower and rubs its juice upon Titania's eyelids. Meanwhile Oberon fixes an ass's head upon the shoulders of Bottom, one of the workmen in the forest, and sets him to sleep in the open air near the Queen's bower. To Oberon's immense amusement Titania, on waking, falls in love with the foolish fellow, and what follows gives occasion for much mirth. I will not tell you more about Shakespeare's play, because you will read it for yourselves, and it will give you a better idea than I can of how much the fairies entered into the thoughts of our ancestors.

There was a legend of King Leil, who was said to have built Carlisle—Kaer-leil—to whom an eagle from a castle wall uttered warning of his death. His son Rhuhudibras was a man, rich and mighty, who, they whispered, dabbled in sorcery. He built baths in which he heated the water with a stone great as a beam. He made wings for himself, and boasted that he could fly like a bird. A great multitude accompanied him to London, where, putting on his wings, he flew so high that he got very near the welkin. The people watched, amazed. Then the wind changed, his flight grew weak and he fell and was dashed to pieces on the roof of a temple. The people said he had angered the god by his presumption. It is asserted by some that Rhuhudibras was the father of Lear, the hero of Shakespeare's tragedy.

DRAMAS FROM THE LEGENDS

A legend that was dear to the heart of the people of the woods was called "The Daughters of Lir." Lir, according to them, was an ocean god, and his daughters were turned into swans, and that is the reason why Erin has forbidden that swans should be killed. Shakespeare's play is founded on the Welsh legend which tells that Lir built Leicester and reigned sixty years. He had three daughters, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia, the youngest, who was dear to her father as his life. Cordelia, however, would not flatter him or speak in exaggerated terms of her love for him, wherefore the old king was wroth and divided his kingdom between his two elder daughters, sending Cordelia away. Presently she married the King of France, who loved her. Meantime Lear, as Shakespeare names him, was ill-treated by Goneril and Regan, and in sorrow at their unkindness he wandered, distraught, upon the moors and sang wild songs :

" Blow, blow thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude."

When Cordelia heard of the persecutions to which her father was exposed she came back to him with her husband, and by her tenderness made him forget her sisters' harsh treatment. Her husband's army fought and killed Goneril and Regan. Three years later Lear died in Cordelia's arms and she buried him in the temple of Janus at Leicester. Shakespeare in his play differs from the legend. He makes Cordelia die, and Lear, maddened by despair, expires singing gently over her body.

The old legend further tells that Cordelia, after her

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husband's death five years later, was attacked by her sisters' sons, who defeated her and made her captive. They tortured her till in her misery "she took a long knife and deprived herself of life."

Another story, adapted by Shakespeare from the legends, is that of Cymbeline, who was the most important king in Britain. He lived during the time of Caesar Augustus. His wife died, leaving him three children, two sons and a daughter. The two sons were stolen from their nursery when the elder was three years of age and the younger quite an infant, and Cymbeline could never discover what had become of them. Imogen, the daughter, was brought up in her father's court, and her step-mother (for the king had married again) wished the girl to wed Cloten, her son, for thereby she hoped to put the crown of Britain on his head. But Imogen had married secretly a playfellow named Posthumus.

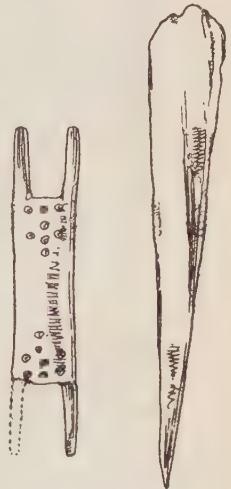
The story, as Shakespeare tells it, concerns itself with the adventures that befel Imogen and Posthumus when the latter was sent away to Rome and the princess had, shortly after, left her father's court to escape betrothal to Cloten. She goes in search of her husband, and on the way would have died from fatigue but is succoured by two youths, who turn out to be her brothers, Polydore and Cadwal, whom an old servant, Belarius, has saved from death. So Polydore and Cadwal found their father, and history tells us that Cadwal became the foremost personage in all Britain.

Thus we find Shakespeare's genius clothing with life and grace old legends that were told in ancient times by mothers to their little ones.



I HAVE told you about Britain, its woods, its rivers, its gods and its legends, about its priests and about its inhabitants, and now I must tell you about London—our mighty London where now all the world congregates ; whose streets are well-nigh impassable for the crowds that jostle and daily assemble there, for the motor cars, the carriages, the omnibuses, and whose foundations are full of life and turmoil as its surface. I must ask you to dismiss from your mind all thought of the great palaces, the luxurious houses, the noble buildings, the sad slums ; to forget all these and think of London as an immense swamp.

The picture I would have you conjure up is of a waste moorland with an immense forest at its back, dreary and desolate in bad weather, in sunny weather full of golden water, of delightful flowers and reeds, of multitudes of birds with beautiful plumage—herons, ducks, swans, and a host of others, happy



Prehistoric Bone Tools
found in London

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

in the solitude and in the beauty of the place. We must think of the river undulating like a serpent, overflowing its natural banks, receiving tributaries till the site of London was nothing but a vast swamp. Fish in plenty were to be caught, salmon

throve in it. Here and there were a few lake dwellings, for such, Sir Walter Besant tells us, was the beginning of our mighty city. Stretching far and wide at its back was the forest of Middlesex, a wood dim with shadows, the branches of the trees locked together, shutting out the sky, filling it with gloom even on sunshiny days. Through it roved the wild cattle, the wolves, the wild boars, the stags.



Bronze
Sword

In the midst of that wonderful marsh was an island somewhat detached by a branch of the river, and rising a few feet above the rest. This was the Isle of Thorney—Thorney means Bramble. Later it came to be known as Westminster, and in it stands our beautiful abbey. Sir Walter Besant disagreed with many writers who look upon Westminster as having always been a holy place from the beginning. He believed that Thorney was the nucleus of London.

In other words, before the port of London came into existence Thorney was a station with a great highway up and down, on which the whole trade of the island passed. It was thronged with those who went across the marsh, bringing their merchandise to sell at the Isle of Thanet and other places near the German Ocean. Every day there passed into Thorney or out



Merchants and their Slaves crossing the Marsh

THE DAWN OF LONDON

of its long processions or caravans of merchants. Their goods, carried by slaves and on pack-horses, mainly consisted of tin, iron, and skins. Their merchandise included, also, slaves and hunting dogs. Little by little there rose near Thorney a settlement for the reception of the caravans, to afford rest and refreshment to the travellers. Passing out of Thorney the merchants found themselves face to face with a mile of dangerous bog before they could reach higher ground. Nowhere in the whole of their journey (and they had dangers enough to face, dark woods to traverse, hills to climb, rivers to ford) was there anything so difficult as that awful slough that lay just outside Thorney. Their slaves made repeated attempts to escape ; their merchandise sank into the mud ; they counted themselves happy to keep a part even of what they had brought.

One day the idea occurred to an unknown person to build a causeway across the slough, and this causeway contributed greatly to the facility of the passage over the swamp. It was the one thing needed for the development of the place, for nowhere was the river so plentifully stocked with fish, nowhere were birds to be trapped and brought down with sling and stone in such numbers as in the immediate neighbourhood of Thorney.

But London was reserved for higher destinies ; its river was to be the queen of rivers, its port was to be a place of assemblage for ships of every nation. Mystery enshrouds the long years that elapsed between the time when the first hunters settled in the spot where the Wall brook emptied its waters into the



Bone
Arrow-
head

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

Thames, and the time when ships from across the sea came to discharge their cargoes from Gaul and other countries. We do not know how the port began.

We know only that its name was Lyn-din, the lake fortress, and that traders from the Continent, Phœnicians, Germans, Gauls, came for tin and for slaves. We must remember, however, that trade could only be carried on during the summer months of July and August, that the sailing of the ships was entirely stopped during the winter, the early spring and the late autumn. Throughout those months the markets were deserted; moorland and marsh had it all their own way.

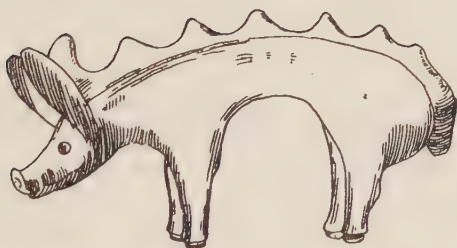


Iron Spear-head

The imports and exports had to be brought to the port by a certain time. Booths and shops were built on either side of the Wall brook and foreign imports were there exchanged for the goods brought by the British traders. The ships were emptied and filled again, they sailed away, the caravans started on their journeys home, the activity was over. As Sir Walter Besant says, the trade of London was an annual fair held in the months of July and August. During the other months London was nothing more than the home of humble folk who trapped the birds, fished the waters, and hunted in the forest. But as the years went on London grew, the port of Lyn-din added temples to heathen gods, added markets to those which already existed. The curtain lifts a little and we catch a glimpse of King Lud. He not only repaired the city but he added to its

THE DAWN OF LONDON

buildings, and he called it after his own name, Cair-Lud, which means Lud's town. He built a strong gate in the west part of the city and its site is still called after him, Ludgate.



Bronze Figure of a Boar

*"And thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave thy wrath and say,
'I will be sorry for their childishness.'"*

PATMORE.



BEFORE I tell you of the Roman invasion, led by Julius Caesar, which was to prove a blessing in disguise for Britain, I will ask you to come with me to the British Museum to see the remains there that tell the story of the past.

Metal first made its appearance in the Bronze Age, and its discovery had an immense influence upon the progress of man towards civilisation. It was revered as a supernatural gift and the smiths who made the weapons and other bronze articles were regarded with something like awe. Bronze, you know, is a compound of tin and copper, and Britain was celebrated for its tin mines. You will remember how Pytheas and his men came in search of them. Tin hardens copper, and this was the reason of its value. We know that our forefathers used bronze before they used iron. The people did not like the newer dark metal when first it came into use. It had an evil look, they said ; they preferred the beautiful golden bronze to which they were accustomed.

Let us go to the British Museum to look at the cases in which are kept the relics of primitive times in Britain, and the remains of the Bronze Age. It

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

is generally from the barrows or the graves that these relics are dug up. The grave gives up the secrets of the dead. When the dead men were buried or cremated some of their most cherished possessions were burned with them, their ornaments, their weapons, their pottery; and their faithful hounds, sometimes their wives, usually their slaves, were killed to do them honour. Often the head of the family was not burnt.



Cinerary Urns

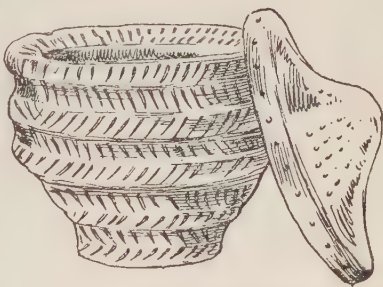
His skeleton was surrounded by many funeral urns, or by the burnt bones of his slaves, and all about it were the ornaments he wore, the weapons he used, the pottery he cared for. The ashes of those who were cremated

were placed in a great urn known as a cinerary urn.

The future life to people in primitive times was something very like the one they knew on earth, and the journey of the soul to the other world was thought to be a long and fatiguing one. There would be buried with the dead, food vessels containing refreshment for the spirits on their journey. Here you will see a food vessel found between two skeletons, one of a man and one of a woman. It has a cover, the shape is very graceful, and it is ornamented with little lines in the herring-bone pattern of decoration. There is another that was found near the skull of a child.

AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

There are the incense cups or braziers. It is very difficult to say what they were used for, perhaps it was for the burning of incense. I am more inclined to believe that they were made to carry the sacred fire from the family hearth to the funeral pyre. The veneration of our ancestors for this fire was strong. The cups were very small, but were highly ornamented; and they are frequently found inside the cinerary urn.



Food Vessel with Cover

The drinking cups had long necks and round bodies. They were of earlier date than the food vessels and were often placed either inside or near the cinerary urns.

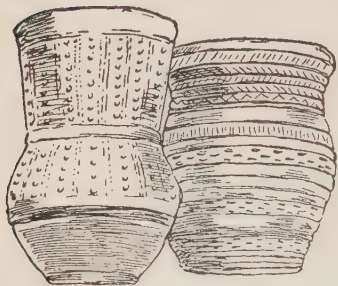


Incense Cups

The early ones were often coarse and ill-baked, and are generally found in fragments. Small pebbles and broken shell were mixed with the paste to prevent the clay from cracking under the process of firing. We

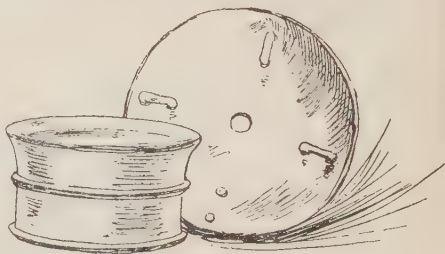
THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

must remember that these urns were made without the assistance of the potter's wheel. The baking is often imperfect, owing to the use of an open fire, but it is a great mistake to suppose that they were sun-baked.



Drinking Cups

Let us now turn to the remains that represent the avocations of the living. You remember I told you of the Heathery Burn cave in the county of Durham, where the family was drowned when asleep. Here from the cave is an armlet of bronze believed to have been worn by a child. You will also see disks with the three loops at the back. How near the time seems as we look at these objects! The other relics also move us, the knives, the daggers, the shields, the leaf-shaped spear-head, the trumpets (found mainly in Ireland)—some curved, some with mouthpieces at one side. Here also are the axes called "celts."



Child's Armlet and Disk from Heathery Burn Cave

As we look upon them we may see in imagination the figure of an old chieftain, clad as he was on earth; we may see his sword, his dagger, his magnificent brooch, the heavy ring through which his cloak was passed. When we think of the dead who have handled these objects, does not a sort of awe come over us?

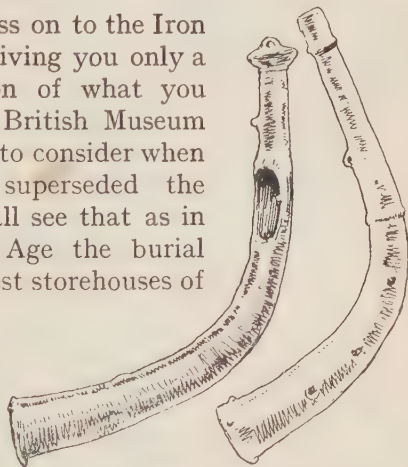
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There is much to see in these cases, bronze and gold bracelets, jet and amber necklaces. I have told you about amber, how it was a charm for the living and the dead. You may see here how much it was used. Ah! those strange ornaments, how they bring home to us the simple folk of the Bronze Age. Amongst the many relics of that distant time preserved in these cases you must notice the buttons of gold and the coloured glass beads. There is a necklace consisting of many beads of beautiful colour, which it is believed belonged to a lady of high rank.



Knife from
Heathery
Burn Cave

Let us now pass on to the Iron Age. As I am giving you only a general indication of what you will see in the British Museum we need not stay to consider when the Iron Age superseded the Bronze. We shall see that as in the case of the Bronze Age the burial places have been the richest storehouses of the secrets of the past. Notice how complex, how charming are the designs in iron. The colour is not so beautiful as that of the golden bronze, but the finish of the ornamentation has very much improved and the geometric figures are most striking.

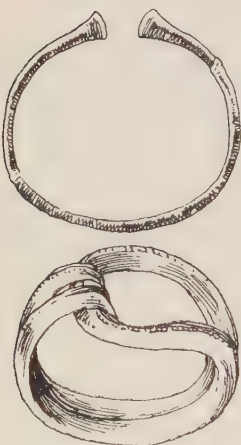


Bronze Trumpets found in Ireland

The swords of the Iron Age are remarkable for their blades, which are very large. Equally

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

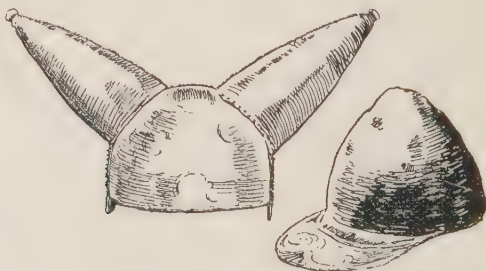
interesting are the ornaments, the brooches, the clasps for the belts, the pendants with chains, the bracelets, the beads and the pins ; nor must we overlook the helmets. Many of them come from Gaul. Observe also the pottery with its geometric designs, painted mostly in red and yellow.



Gold Bracelets

I do not want to burden your minds with many names, but I should like you to remember two great periods named after two great finds, the Hallstatt, from a burial place in Austria, and the La Tène from a site in Switzerland.

La Tène was an area situated at the mouth of a small bay at the northern end of a settlement in Switzerland. The ancient settlement was built on piles, perhaps on the shore of the lake, perhaps with the water all round,

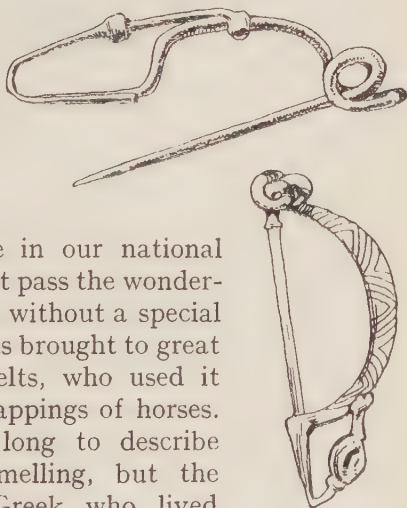


Bronze Helmets

and the find there of antiquities was of the first import-

AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

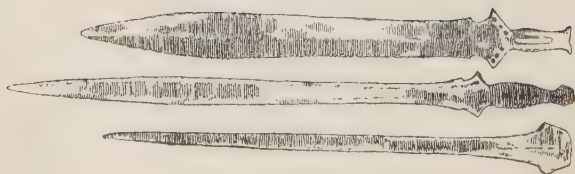
ance. The La Tène brooches are very characteristic, and in the British Museum there is a fine selection of them. It would be far too tiresome for you if I were to trace here the evolution of the brooch from the simplest form, resembling more than anything else our safety pin, to the beautiful and artistic designs in the Museum cases. Many have been reproduced in the British Museum Guide to the Antiquities of the Early Iron Age. Nor can we stop to examine all the ornaments, the weapons, the objects of daily use in our national collection. We cannot pass the wonderful enamels, however, without a special word. Enamelling was brought to great perfection by the Celts, who used it especially for the trappings of horses. It would take too long to describe the method of enamelling, but the following, from a Greek who lived early in the third century A.D., is interesting. Referring to the varied trappings of horses, he wrote: "They say that the barbarians who lived in Ocean"—the river supposed by the ancients to surround the earth—"poured these colours on heated bronze, and that they adhered and became as hard as stone, and preserved the designs that are made in them." Notice that the enamel does not monopolise the surface;



Brooches of La
Tène Type

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the broad bands of bronze are left and when the bronze is of a golden colour the effect is superb. Red was the colour used by the Celts ; it was only in the Roman period that various tints were used in enamelling. The Celtic ornament was chiefly scrolls, beautifully involved curves, as may be seen in the marvellous needlework of a later date, principally from Ireland.



Bronze Swords



BRITAIN was still a land of forests and marshes, alive with the rustle of winds, peopled with strange beasts, some fierce, some kindly. As of yore, the marshes were infested with numberless snakes and bright with brilliant-winged insects, venomous, darting through and above the marshy vegetation. In the dark depths of the woods were the settlements, some large, some small, sometimes huts sheltered by the trees, sometimes lake-dwellings raised on piles.

Britain was peopled by many tribes in various stages of civilisation: the Trinovantes, whose capital was to be London; the Caluvellani, whose chief town was to be Verulam, now known as St Albans; the Icen; the Silures; the Brigantes, and many others. They were ever at war, tribe against tribe, and chieftain against chieftain, and the vanquished were enslaved by the conquerors. In the groves of oak, the Druids practised their mysterious rites, but every settlement had its own tribal gods. It was a savage land, and its inhabitants had savage instincts, but it was their own land. They loved it and would die for it.

The British tribes in the interior gained their liveli-

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hood by hunting and keeping cattle and were clad in skins, but those nearer the coast had begun to grow



Map of Britain showing the Distribution of the largest Areas of Forest Land and the probable positions of the chief Tribes

corn and were dressed in bright-coloured cloths and linen. This marked the change to a superior state which was continually in progress. Here and there

THE ROMANS ARE COMING

the settlements had developed into small towns, forming the headquarters of a tribe. The time has come for a greater change. An outside power is to thrust its strong hand into the seething and dis-united island, and the shadow of its first rude shock is drawing nigh.

From the merchants who trafficked with Gaul and foreign parts, taking their slaves, their skins, their magnificent hounds, to be bartered on the Continent ; from the pupils who came to be taught by the Druids, the Briton had heard of Julius Caesar, the invincible man whose eye was upon their country. All said that he had questioned them about Britain. What was its size, what was its population, what were its harbours ?—and all had answered vaguely. They had told him as little as they could, they had even sought to lead him astray. But he had sent one of his lieutenants, Volusenus, to find out what they had left unanswered. Why was Julius Caesar so curious ? It boded ill for Britain. All gave wonderful accounts of him, his majestic bearing, his short, brief speech. Woe to the country he was curious about ! The Britons heard and their suspicions were roused. Julius Caesar would come, they felt it ; but they would defend their homes and their island to the death. The Druids in their groves of oak, in the shades of Stonehenge and Avebury, offered sacrifices to Perkunos, the god of the hills and of battle. The Britons sharpened their weapons and day and night practised with their chariots, driving them at high speed and stopping them when in full gallop.

“ He is coming,” said the pupils of the Druids ; “ he is coming,” repeated the merchants, “ he is very strong,

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a very god among men, Toutates is not more warlike to look upon, men cower before him."

Some of the British tribes sent envoys to offer submission to Caesar, asking him to spare their island. The Conqueror received them courteously; he accepted their submission, he encouraged them in their good resolutions.

"Caesar will be your friend," he said. "He will allow none to hurt you; whom he protects is safe. Go to your countrymen, bid them all do what you are doing. Tell them Caesar will come in person to accept their submission."

And the envoys promised. No one should resist him. He was the chosen of the gods: it was writ upon his person, and expressed in his every look.

"I send Comminus as my ambassador. His presence will protect you, and he will assure your countrymen of my kind intentions towards them."





A Standard-Bearer

IT was the month of August at three o'clock on the morning of the 27th. The dawn had not yet risen, had not yet sent a ray of light across the sky when Caesar set forth from Gaul to invade Britain. It was ten o'clock before he sighted the white cliffs near Dover. Many of you have seen them yourselves, those great walls of chalk that nature has placed about our island.

The Britons knew that he, the conqueror, was coming, and they were resolved to dispute every inch of the ground. They covered the cliffs with a crowd of waiting figures, and as he drew near Caesar scanned their ranks with his keen eye. He stood a noble figure wrapped in his toga. His armour was covered with ornaments of gold, with curves and intricate designs, the short skirt, or rather kilt, such as our Highlanders wear to-day, was of chain mail similarly ornamented. Upon his feet he wore high shoes of untanned leather, laced up the front, and his head was decked with a helmet wholly surmounted with a huge plume composed of eagles' feathers. We can see his clean-cut features, his resolute mien, his magnificent bearing. He looked

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

indeed master of the world. No one dared approach him.

From the cliffs the Britons were watching. It was a crowd terrible to look upon. The larger part was composed of men painted blue with woad to make themselves look more terrible; faces, bodies, arms, all that could be seen was of that awful greenish blue. Their hair was thrust back over the forehead and fell about their shoulders. In their hands they bore javelins and axes. The chiefs were splendid and more barbaric figures; their helmets adorned with feathers and wings, their arms covered with bracelets. The chieftains in higher command wore metal coats, and over them a cloak. Their shields were long of shape, depressed in the centre, and were held by loops; the leather thongs of their sandals wound up their naked legs. They stood up in chariots, these terrible chariots used by the Britons, the wheels of which were covered with spikes. The horses were harnessed with trappings of bronze. In the background we can imagine the women watching, uttering cries of execration the while. The augurs were there, the bards, calling down curses upon the invaders of their country.

The sight appalled the Romans. They stood watching the spectacle without moving. Caesar gave the signal to cast anchor and he waited with the assembled multitude until his other ships came. These had been detached from the central body, and it was three o'clock before they arrived. Then he assembled the officers and told them his plans. They were to obey whenever he gave the signal—to obey at once, without hesitation. He would be there watching the fight.



The Battle on the Shore

THE ROMANS HAVE COME

The Roman vessels weighed anchor, and as they moved the Britons on the cliffs above kept pace with them. The fleet sailed on the blue sea, above on the cliffs the defenders of Britain followed on foot or in their chariots.

It was at Deal, seven miles from Dover, that Caesar gave the signal to stop. The landing was easier here, where the shore was free. Perhaps you have been to Deal, that pleasant watering-place near Walmer Castle, the one-time residence of Wellington, the modern general who resembled Caesar. It is a peaceful spot, where on the beach the children play at building castles in the sand, while their elders read and work and watch the vessels coming and going. And beyond are the treacherous Goodwin Sands.

The great Roman galleys could not approach very near to shore because they drew too much water ; the legionaries, weighted by their heavy armour, feared to jump into the waves. Before them were congregated the Britons, in their eagerness pressing into the water. They launched their javelins amongst the invaders or stood prepared with heavy stones, while the chariots rushed hither and thither. Well might the Roman soldiers hesitate to approach. Was victory going to desert them ? Would it crown the armies of the gallant though barbaric defenders of Britain ? Caesar called to his cohorts in vain. They would not move. Then it was that a Roman soldier, inspired by the valour of the heroes of his country, came to the rescue. He was an officer who carried the eagle. He clutched the standard that had never yet fallen into the hands of the enemy, the sacred standard for which his countrymen had died in thousands ; he lifted it high, and Caesar

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watched and all men waited. He seemed to dedicate it to the god of hosts. A silence fell upon the embattled forces. "Jupiter," said the standard-bearer, "bless what I am going to do and let it be for the good of my country, for the glory of my general." Then turning to the assembled Romans he addressed them in a loud voice. "I go with the standard, with the eagle that has never been defeated—I will carry it away to yonder barbarians, let who will follow me, those who will not let the standard be dishonoured. I go to do my duty for the honour of the gods and of my general." Saying which he threw himself into the waves, holding the great standard aloft as he leapt. Then the Roman spirit was roused. The legionaries, weighted with armour, sprang into the waves, following their officer. The Britons cast their javelins, and with wild and savage cries threw their heavy fragments of stone into the midst of their foes. The chariots drove here and there upon the shore, as an excited dog turns and returns before a caged rat; the swords, the spears, the axes were flourished with shouts of imprecation as the ranks of the Britons gathered round. But the fire of bravery once more inspired the Romans.

I can never look at that quiet shore in Kent, at peaceful Deal, without thinking of that scene, without seeing the water, red with blood, crowded with half-naked savage figures fighting to the death. Would the Romans be able to land? Caesar stood watching the carnage. Many of his brave followers were drowned, many were slain as they struggled to find a footing. On shore and in the surf the chariots with their deadly wheels inflict death

THE ROMANS HAVE COME

amongst the ranks of those who won their way to land. But Caesar sent reinforcements, and at last the superior discipline and weapons of the Romans prevailed. Further resistance was impossible and the Britons fled for cover to their woods.



*" Courage, then ! for we cannot fail
Though the stress is stern and the blows repeated,
God and a single man prevail
When a cause seems lost and its hope defeated.
Once ' he blew with his wind ' and they ?
Where were they, the all-conquering galleons ?
Better to fail with Truth to-day
Than to march at the head of the big battalions."*

BALDRY.



THE next day a deputation of the Britons came to sue for peace. They brought with them Comminus, who had been sent as Caesar's ambassador when they had gone to Gaul, asking for peace before the invasion. They had roughly treated and imprisoned him when fate seemed propitious, but now that it had decided against the Britons they came to the all-conquering commander begging for clemency. Caesar was in his tent still clad in armour when the deputation entered. His stern countenance was sterner than usual. The deputation almost grovelled before him as they met his eagle eye. "You have broken your pledge. What have you done to my envoy?" he asked.

"It was the common people, they did not understand, they were ignorant. Do not visit upon the nation the sins of the ignorant."

"How can I trust you?" Julius Caesar's frown was terrible, it struck terror into the hearts of those who came to supplicate him.

"I trusted you when you came to ask for mercy,

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I accepted your submission, I bade you tell your countrymen that I should visit them. I treated you courteously, I sent you back in safety with Comminus to protect you."

"Yes! yes!" said the pleaders.

"And how did you treat me? You received me like an enemy. You manned your cliffs with barbarian mobs, you got your chariots ready to overwhelm my legions, you killed, you wounded, you opposed my legionaries when I came trusting in your reception."

The souls of those who formed the deputation burnt within them. They loved their Britain, its dense woods, its savage life, its terrible religion. It was their land. But they did not dare to provoke the Conqueror, although they gloried in the resistance that their countrymen had offered. They repeated again that they had come in humility to make peace, to offer what terms Julius Caesar would accept. They pleaded once more the ignorance of the people. The Conqueror wished to temporise. He knew he had not men enough to subjugate that untamed people, but he expected reinforcements. His lieutenant had gone over to Gaul to bring a fleet with cavalry on board. He appeared to relent.

"I am willing to accept your pleas," he said, "but I demand hostages responsible for your future good behaviour. Remember they will be slain without mercy if your people fail in their promises to Caesar."

"Here are hostages ready," said the envoy, pointing to a number of men. "Others are on the way from different parts of the country. Some days must elapse before they can arrive."

Caesar deemed it best to appear satisfied. "It is

AFTER THE BATTLE

well," he said, " but remember, in a few days the full number of hostages must be here."

The envoys left, vowing to bring the hostages, and it seemed that peace had settled upon the land. The sentinel paced up and down before Caesar's camp and the General busied himself in drilling the legions. He was watching the sea the while, gazing towards the horizon for sign of the fleet from Gaul with his cavalry.

In the dense woods the women were imploring Toutates, the god of war, and the other gods for their country, offering prayers and sacrifices to them, that they might defend Britain from the enemy. The woods re-echoed with their wild cries, with those of the children, and of the old men, heaping curses upon the Romans. And in all the oak groves the Druids sacrificed human victims and animals, supplicating Perkunos, the god of hills and of battles, to protect the Britons ; calling upon all the great gods to come to their help.

It is the 30th August. Caesar is pacing restlessly to and fro on the shore, watching the waves breaking on the beach. Suddenly he sees a speck on the horizon and he pauses in his restless walk. The speck grows and grows. It is the fleet bearing the cavalry from Gaul ! The time has come, the time of victory ! A vision rises before him. He will subjugate the wild people fighting from their chariots, with the horsemen that are coming he will pursue the flying multitudes. Great sighs of relief rend his breast as he thanks the gods that they have come to Caesar's help.

Suddenly the beautiful day changes, the limpid sky darkens with clouds, the cries of the seagulls are heard

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

sounding like cries for help. Are the prayers of the women and children in the woods answered? Are the incantations of the Druids working? A storm has risen, unforeseen, terrible, from the leaden sky; the lightning lashes with flame the sea and earth, the thunder peals, the waves rise mountains high. They are defending Britain, defying the proud invader. The ships seek to maintain their course, but the wind drags them back to the port from which they sailed. Others are carried along the coast. They try to draw nearer, but in vain. The waves and the winds will not let them, and they are compelled to return to Gaul. The whole fleet has vanished, and gone are the horses upon which Caesar had counted.

The spell has not yet done its work. It is night now and the storm is over, the full moon rides a cloudless sky, illuminating it with its beams. Below, the waves are still restlessly breaking and sobbing. It is the neap tide and the Romans have not prepared for it. It fills the ships of war that are anchored on the shore, it wrecks or renders useless the merchant vessels. Are the Britons after all to be victorious, are the Romans to be destroyed? In the camp a great confusion arises. The soldiers ask themselves if such indeed is to be their fate. The officers are troubled, they know that the means of getting back are gone, and they also know that no provision has been made for a stay in the barbarous island. Caesar alone is undismayed.



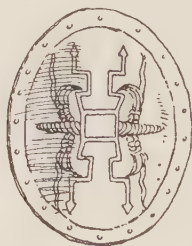
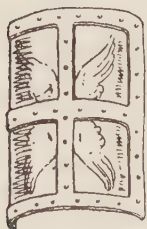
THE Britons were watching and they knew that the Roman ships were seriously injured, that the cavalry had been unable to land, that corn was wanting in the camp. If they could but protract the war till winter, victory might yet be theirs. If they could but prevent the Romans from returning until the bad weather set in, all would be well for Britain. They met in the woods to discuss their plans, they sent to distant parts of the country to let their resolve be known, and to bring up the other tribes. This was the time to strike, when the enemy was weak.

They went very cautiously to work. Julius Caesar knew nothing for certain but he suspected much. The hostages were not coming into the camp which the Romans had set up at Richborough and the movements of the Britons were suspicious. It was the time to make ready, and he, with his far-seeing eye, did not neglect any precaution. Two alternatives presented themselves, and he prepared for both. He must go, or he must lay in a store of provisions should he decide upon staying; in any case he must get the

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ships manned. While the British chiefs were meeting in the silent depths of the woods to decide what they should do, he was preparing to stay or not to stay. He sent out his soldiers to reap the ripe fields. He kept others by him to repair the damaged ships. Those which had been most injured by the storm he ordered to be broken up, their timber and their bronze would be useful. The camp presented a busy spectacle. The soldiers mended the broken vessels, making them sea-worthy once more. They sang at their work songs

dear to the Roman heart, songs of love and sunshine, the songs of brave deeds. They celebrated their beautiful land with its golden sunshine and blue skies. They worked with so much zeal that soon their



Roman Shields

task was done. Meantime the soldiers reaped the harvest upon which the Britons had counted for their winter food. One field yet remained to yield its corn; it was surrounded by the vast wood and lay at a little distance from the camp.

One morning the soldiers set forth, a gallant sight; their armour shines in the sunlight, their horses' trappings are like gold. They salute Caesar as they go. He watches them until they disappear through the green trees. Presently they come to their destination. The wheat hangs its heavy head, and stretches golden before them. They lay aside their weapons, they fasten their horses to the neighbour-

VICTORY AND DEFEAT

ing trees. Some stand on guard, others, scythe in hand, plunge into the field. They have been attacked previously. Time and again a Briton has concealed himself behind bushes, or even under the water amidst clumps of water plants and rushes and has suddenly dealt a death-stroke upon some hapless Roman soldier engaged in reaping or guarding the reapers. But here all seems peaceful. The lark above is singing his song for very joy of the sunshine and sweet air, and the soldiers sing as they cut the corn. They do not know that in the wood hard by the Britons are stealthily watching. They have been hiding there through the night. They have calculated that the Romans would come, for this was the only field in the neighbourhood left unreaped. They gathered in the wood in large numbers, they have brought their chariots. How quiet they stand! They watch the Romans laying aside their armour and fastening their horses to the trees. They wait till the soldiers are scattered and at work. Then, with unearthly cries, they rush forth, their chariots clattering, and they fall upon the enemy in furious onslaught. The disciplined Roman soldiers are not easily daunted, but the number of the Britons is overwhelming. As the chariots fly hither and thither the charioteers cast their javelins and often jump suddenly out and attack their foes on foot. This uncertainty of tactics dismays the Romans. Nevertheless, like parts of a machine they fall together into rank, they form a square, and the Britons close in upon them. Are the Romans lost? To many of those unfaltering soldiers the terrible question presents itself. If their General only knew of their plight! But who is there to tell him? He will know it by-and-

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by, their slaughtered bodies on the field will tell him.

“What means that cloud of dust in the distance?” asked a guard of another passing in front of Caesar’s camp. Both looked a moment and then the second guard said :

“Let us tell the General.”

They found Julius Caesar in his tent, with some officers about him, discussing their plans.

“General, there is a cloud of dust in the distance. We do not understand what it means,” said the guards.



Roman
Short
Sword

He went at once to the door of his tent, sheltering his eyes with his hand. This way his soldiers had gone, this way lay the field they were to reap. He guessed at once that they had been attacked. He did not hesitate a moment :

“Bring my horse—all who can follow me at once,” he cried. “Let others get ready and follow quickly after !”

He sprang on his horse, and with sword and shield he and his followers rode forth. The horses seemed to know that they were going to the help of comrades, for they galloped with speed. Julius Caesar did not speak, his glance was fixed intently before him, thicker grew the dust. Presently they could hear the whizzing of the javelins, the swish of the swords, the rushing of the chariots hither and thither. Still Caesar did not speak, but he was seen by the Roman soldiers. The square they had formed was not broken, a shout was raised of welcome and thanksgiving. Their General was coming in person and where he came was victory. The

VICTORY AND DEFEAT

Britons also had seen him and, surprised and paralysed, they stood amazed. They faltered; they fled before the rallying Romans; fresh reinforcements arrived; but Julius Caesar would not pursue, he would not enter the terrible forest. He and his legions fall back upon the camp.

The weather again has changed, rain and wind desolate the country, for days there is a truce. Comminus, the faithful Gaul, has crossed the water and brought back thirty horses. The Britons too have turned the time of inaction to account. They have sent emissaries far and wide to represent the plight of the Romans, and their weakness; to tell of the booty in Caesar's camp, how mighty would be the advantage of striking a blow that, if victorious, would assure for ever the freedom of their island. The message was received enthusiastically, the response to it was great. With many chariots the tribesmen assembled.



Roman Helmet

But what could the barbarians do against the skill and discipline of the legions? Victory was not long in declaring itself. Again the Britons were routed and fled helter-skelter in confusion. The Romans pursued until from sheer weariness they could pursue no longer. But ere returning to camp they burnt all the dwellings in their path and destroyed what corn was still standing.

That same day the Britons sent emissaries entreating the clemency of Caesar. He was but too glad to make peace. "But I shall double the number of hostages," he said. He did not mean them to be sent to the camp,

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

they should follow him to Gaul, whither he had determined to return. The bad weather, he knew, was at hand, and his ships, though repaired, were not sufficiently sea-worthy to face the winter storms, so at midnight he left, facing the darkness of the night in the very galley that had brought him. Fate was favourable to the great commander, he landed safely on the shore of Gaul, and his legionaries in the other ships were not less fortunate.

Britain, the mysterious island lying alone in the ocean, appealed to the imagination of the Romans. Caesar had come, he had seen, he had conquered. The Senators, who had assembled in Rome upon receiving the tidings that he was returning victorious, voted a public thanksgiving that lasted twenty days, and the people went wild with rejoicing.

How did Caesar take his triumph? He was a man of few words. He had been but three weeks in the terrible land and he knew that he had not subjugated the Britons; he had not wrested from them their country, their forests, their marshes, haunted by strange beasts. He had not pursued them one mile inland from the shore. He had not conquered, but he had seen Britain. He had made acquaintance with a people ready to shed their last drop of blood for their island, clever at stratagems, as ready to make peace at a moment's notice as to break the agreement. This campaign was but a preparation for one in the future. Next year he would strike the decisive blow. Julius Caesar had never yet failed.



NEARLY a year had elapsed and Julius Caesar was preparing to invade Britain a second time. It was decided that a mighty army should be raised to oppose him. Each tribe put aside its wrongs and all agreed to obey the one whom they chose as their war-king. Who was it to be? The Druids celebrated their awful rites and invoked the gods by solemn sacrifices. Processions of white-clad priests with chaplets of oak leaves on their heads wound through the dense forests. At Stonehenge the archdruid came in garments of crimson brocade and gold, with gold bracelets on his arms, and a gold circlet round his neck, followed by the Druids in white. After them came the bards in pale blue, chanting the great deeds of the Britons in the past, calling on the gods to help them at this crisis; then came the Ovates in pale green. The Druidesses followed, chanting to Belisama.

The victims were ready. Horrible to relate, some were children, some were young girls and youths, all were beautiful. They had been placed in wicker cages, and would be burnt alive or sacrificed on a dark stone

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at the foot of the altar. There were the white bulls that had never yet been yoked. Far and near was heard the sound of invocation: the sacrificial stones reeked with blood, the flames from the burning wicker cages full of victims rose to heaven. Who would Perkunos choose—who would Toutates appoint as his representative—who should be the leader of the tribal chiefs?

The gods had answered, they had named Cassivelaunus, King of the Catuvellauni. He was to be the leader of men, he was the chosen one. At the dread command the other kings had agreed to aid him, they had vowed to sink their individual wrongs, they had declared that they would give him loyal obedience. Who was this king of men?

We think of him as of a hero described by Homer, for he was splendid to look upon, tall, muscular and red-haired. His tawny locks fell over his shoulders, his long moustache mingled with his hair. He was magnificent in dress: a brooch fastened his cloak, his arms were covered with bracelets, his massive legs were bound with the thongs of his sandals. He loved Britain, its wild, free life, its great forests, its high hills, above all he loved the great breathing sea. He loved to drive forth in his chariot. He would die rather than let the stranger have dominion over his native land. In his heart he was bitter against all the tribes, the Trinovantes especially, who had submitted to Caesar. He would not be cajoled into the belief that if he were only a Roman subject no harm should come to him. He would hold no parley with such assurances, he would live or die for Britain. During the past year, he knew, Caesar had been busy preparing for a second



Cassivelaunus the War-lord

CASSIVELAUNUS

invasion of his native land. All the time he was fighting Gaul his mind had been occupied with the greater scheme. He had mended the ships that needed repair, he had built others better fitted to effect a landing. They were to be galleys with flat keels like those of the Britons, they were to have higher fore-castles, instead of three rows of oarsmen they were to have a single set.

Cassivelaunus wrote thus to Caesar :

“ Cassivelaunus, King of the Britons, to Caius Julius Caesar.

“ We cannot but wonder, Caesar, at the avarice of the Roman people, since their insatiable thirst for money cannot let us alone, though the dangers of the ocean have placed us, in a manner, out of the world ; but they must have the presumption to covet our substance, which we have hitherto enjoyed in quiet. Neither is this, indeed, sufficient : we must also choose subjection and slavery to them, before the enjoyment of our native liberty. Your demand, therefore, Caesar, is scandalous, since the same blood flows from Æneas in both Romans and Britons, which ought to be a bond of union between them. It was *that* you should have desired to promote, and not our slavery : we are ready to admit the one, but will never bear the other. And so much have we been accustomed to liberty, that we are perfectly ignorant what it is to submit to slavery. Know then, Caesar, that we are ready to fight for our freedom and our kingdom, if, as you threaten, you shall attempt to invade Britain.”

All the winter Cassivelaunus had questioned those who came from over the sea : the British merchants

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who went with their merchandise and bartered with the strangers ; the slave merchants, the pedlars exploring trading roads ; the travelling sword-makers ; also students on their way to Mona to learn from the Druids of their strange beliefs and their occult sciences.

Through the year Cassivelaunus had not ceased preparing for Caesar. He had assembled the tribes, he had gone in his chariot to visit them. He had superintended the chariot drill and had watched the tribesmen drive at their highest speed, to stop at the most perilous point and turn. He knew the strength of Britain ; he had built fortified camps and was now waiting for the invader.

It was not until the first week of July 54 B.C. that the fleet of the enemy was seen on the horizon. Then, taking his mighty spear and his splendid shield, the king of men mounted his enamelled chariot and drove forth. It is a picture to fire the imagination, we see the heroic figure standing upright behind the galloping horses, their trappings bright with bronze, their bridles decked in red enamel of Celtic ornamentation ; they knew, the gallant horses, that they were going to battle, and they bore themselves as though proud of bearing the Commander ! His war-whoop rose above the clatter of the horses' hoofs upon the uneven ground, the chieftains followed, uttering like cries. Behind the chiefs came the hordes of Britons, their faces blue with war-paint, their shields covered with skins, all armed with javelins, swords, daggers and axes. On they came, yelling and shrieking, and above the appalling din sounded the blare of the Celtic trumpets. Never, surely, was such a hurly-burly, such crashing through the forest aisles, such unearthly sounds and blasts.

CASSIVELAUNUS

In the depths of the woods the Druids were offering sacrifices, and often the terrified scream of victims offered to Toutates, the god of battles, could be heard through the quiet glades, frightening the wild beasts. The women, the children, the old, waited the issue. Some went with the warriors, others watched in their homes.

The scouts whom he had sent before returned to Cassivelaunus. They told him that the Romans were about to land at Sandwich, the little town near Rye which is still beautiful in decay, where the old walls overlook gardens where once flowed the sea. In the old days it was a mighty harbour, and there the Roman ships sailed in. Cassivelaunus questioned the scouts, and though the news he received was bad enough to make a stout heart quail, he betrayed no sign of fear. There were seventeen hundred Gallic cavalry, they told him. "How many legions?" he asked unfaltering.

"Five," is the answer. "Caesar has twenty to thirty thousand men."

"We will not wait for him on the cliffs or on the shore, we will retreat to our camp, and trust to our chariots."

Wherefore when Caesar lands he finds none waiting for him. The cliffs are bare, the shore is deserted, not a man is to be seen. The mighty forest hides the Britons, Caesar must go and seek them.

Six hundred ships have the Romans, of which twenty-eight are ships of war. Leaving them under the care of one of his officers Caesar goes himself by night to look for the enemy. He advances only about twelve miles along the river Stour when he sees them.

The Britons have come down from a hill in

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

great force. Caesar recognises the great figure of Cassivelaunus standing on the pole of his chariot, and he hears him calling to his men in thunderous voice as the horses fly hither and thither. He sees the glitter of their trappings, the shining of the chief's shield. The moonlight falls, too, on thousands of wild blue-painted forms, their faces stained with woad. The savage yells and the blare of trumpets add to the horror of the spectacle. It is like a nightmare; then the scene vanishes as quickly as it came, for the Britons have disappeared into the great forest beyond.

Early the next morning Caesar follows them into the wood to Cassivelaunus's camp. It is a place admirably fortified by nature and by art. All the entrances are protected by a number of felled trees. It is a quarter of a mile long and two hundred yards broad, with a ditch in front, deep and wide. Caesar prepares to take it, but the Britons are ready. They harass his troops, flying in and out among them in their chariots, throwing their weapons, breaking through their ranks. The dread of the horses, the destruction wrought by the flying chariots, the yells and the blare of the trumpets demoralise the legionaries. The fierce enemy work themselves in between the troops, they leap from their chariots and engage them on foot. As they do so the charioteers withdraw some little distance and place themselves so that, should their masters be overpowered, they might have a ready retreat. Cassivelaunus is seen everywhere; his brave horses never falter in their speed; his gigantic form, his red hair, his blue-painted face, make him conspicuous, his voice is heard on every side encouraging his men,

CASSIVELAUNUS

bringing them cheer and high purpose. On the other side Caesar and his generals inspire the Romans, reminding them of their noble traditions. Will they be beaten by a handful of savages? If they but break into the camp victory will be theirs.

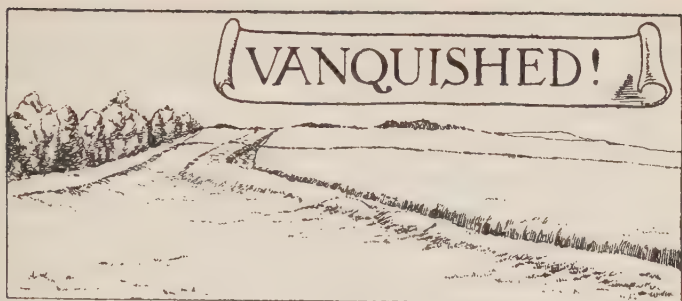
“Form a tortoise—rush the camp!” is the order.

The men fall into ranks. The first rank hold their shields well in front of them; then come other ranks, each separated by about three feet. The men hold their shields above their heads in such a manner as to overlap the shields of the men in front of them, and thus forming scales that resemble those of a tortoise. They are mighty shields, not to be pierced by arrow or spear. They are covered by hides and by plates of brass. Under their cover faggots are brought wherewith the ditch is filled, and a way is made upon which the legionaries can walk.

With the voice of Caesar ringing in their ears the soldiers advance to the edge of the ditch, and cross it in safety. There is a struggle, the battle is won. The Britons are driven from their entrenchment and fly to the forest. Caesar will not allow his men to pursue them. They will be caught in these trackless woods, in these impenetrable glades, and he needs them all.

*"Folk in thrall to the enemy,
Vanquished, tilling a soil
Hateful and hostile grown.
Always wearily, warily,
Feeding deep in the heart
Passion they dare not own."*

NEWBOLT.



Remains of Roman Entrenchments

THE next day came news to Caesar that a great storm had arisen and that his ships were greatly damaged. Again nature fought for the Britons, again the women's prayers to their household gods to defend their hearth seem to have been answered. The entreaties of the Druids in the oak groves of Anglesea, and in the forests of Britain, calling to Perkunos, of the Druidesses to Belisama, to come to the rescue of their island, seem to have been heard. The storm had broken, terrible and unforeseen, the waves had buffeted the Roman ships and the wind had swept over them; forty of them were lost and many were damaged. There was great and terrible ruin. The Britons rejoiced, their prayers were answered, the gods had fought on their side.

Cassivelaunus never relaxed his efforts: he went hither and thither rallying the tribes and urging them to make further preparations against the enemy. The Romans would not be beaten by a storm. Already their hammers resounded, the noise of their weapons was heard. They were repairing the ships. Under Caesar's direction they brought them into a safer port, where,

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placed high and dry, they could not be injured by the waves.' Then they fortified the place, surrounding it by earthworks connecting it with the camp at Richborough.

Again Caesar went forth to meet the Britons. Cassivelaunus was not there. He had gone to wait for the Conqueror by a ford of the Thames. Before going he had taught the chiefs how to harass the enemy and terrorise them. To the left, to the right, before, behind them the chariots must appear and goad the foe by wild shrieks and by blowing of horns, striking panic into their hearts.

That night when the Romans are entrenching their camp the Britons come out of the wood ; a cloud of warriors in their chariots fall upon the cohorts and drive them in. The next day they keep to the great swelling downs of Surrey, and Caesar sends out two legions of cavalry to meet them. The wild, brave men rush out, they surge round the standards ; but what can bravery do against discipline ? Caesar's voice upholds his legions. His commanders inspire their men, and the Britons are put to flight. Once more the dense woods receive them ; the prayers of the women and the Druids are unavailing.

Like fate, cold, unmoved, relentless, Caesar continues his march. Crossing the Surrey downs he strikes northward till he comes to Walton-on-Thames, near to the historic ford of Cosway Stakes.

Cassivelaunus and a large number of Britons are waiting there ; night and day they have worked to fortify the ford. They have made outworks, they have driven rows of stakes into the river bank, one row below the water. Caesar orders the cavalry to go forward first, but

VANQUISHED

the legions are impatient. He will not oppose them ; let them strike when their zeal is hot, and so with their heavy weapons, with their armour and shields, the footmen push into the water. The Britons see them coming, their helmeted heads alone above the surface. They trust in their stakes, but what can stakes do against such spirit and such resolve ? Some of the Romans are carried off by the current but most of them reach the opposite bank in safety. With a cry they rush to the onset. The Britons too are yelling their war-whoops. The chariots try the same old manœuvres, seeking to harass the legions. The voice of Cassivelaunus dominates the tumult. All is confusion, the Britons are beaten, and before the Roman cavalry has time to charge them, they flee for refuge once more into the dense forests.

Cassivelaunus, seeing that there was no hope of meeting the Romans successfully in a pitched battle, disbanded his army ; he bade the tribes leave with him four thousand of the best charioteers. With them he could keep the enemy at bay. Perhaps he could rid Britain of the proud invader by harassing his flanks, by moving here and there, sometimes at his front, sometimes at his rear. Wherever the Romans were, there he appeared with his tribesmen in their chariots. He seemed to have a charmed life and his restless energy inspired his followers.

The Romans set fire to the clusters of huts that formed the villages, but they would not be enticed into the forest wilds. They would not be separated, for that very moment, the charioteers were upon them, wailing aloud, a maddened crew. The blare of their trumpets was ever in the ear of the legions, their

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gallant horses, docile to every sign of their drivers' hands, disappeared as swiftly as they came.

The enemy might grow weary and leave the sacred soil of the island. Cassivelaunus's hopes ran high, when one day a messenger arrived footsore, scarcely able to gasp his news. The Trinovantes, who dwelt round about Colchester, had submitted to Caesar.

"No!" cries the king of men, "it cannot be."

"Nay," insists the messenger. "I saw their envoys go in. I saw them humble themselves."

"Oh! the craven, the double-dealing craven!" cries the chief, with clenched hands, the veins on his forehead standing out like ropes. He had dreamt of setting Britain free, and now he despairs; he cannot do it. The mightiest tribe in this part of Britain has proved faithless. "It cannot be; no man can be so false," he repeats.

Alas! other messengers arrive, other tribes have followed the example of the Trinovantes. The king listens in silence, his head falls on his breast. What visions he has had of setting his country free, visions of Britain, the island set in the silver sea! Was his beloved land, with its forests, its marshes, its rivers, to be conquered by the foreigner?

"They are taking him to your village—they are leading him through the forest," cries one who has just arrived. With something like a roar Cassivelaunus rouses himself, and with his followers mounts his chariot, and sets out for his village. You know it as St Albans, the beautiful town on the river Ver. A cathedral now rises in its midst, houses cluster about it, the peaceful country stretches far and wide. It stood then in the



The Roman Onslaught at Cosway Stakes

VANQUISHED

forest, with the home of Cassivelaunus conspicuous among the huts, a rampart and a ditch protecting it. The dwellers in the forest looked upon it as a place of refuge; the women and the children and the old folk are there. With feverish haste Cassivelaunus sets about fortifying it more strongly. He has still hope; if he can get help he may conquer yet. He sends Lugotrix, his faithful friend, to the four kings of Kent.

“ Bid them burn the fleet of Caesar,” he says. “ We will make him and his legions unable to leave Britain, unable to get reinforcements, and we will conquer yet.”

Meanwhile Caesar and his legions advance, relentless, to burn the stronghold of Cassivelaunus. It is difficult to enter, with its strong rampart, its immense ditch, but they advance, implacable. They form a tortoise, they fill the ditch with faggots. In vain do the chariots come out, in vain do the trumpets blow, in vain does Cassivelaunus's war-cry dominate the tumult. The Romans set fire to the village at two points. The animals are frightened by the mounting flames, the women and children are driven forth, screaming. All the Britons are panic-stricken. They fly, leaving the village and what it contains to the Romans. They go deeper into the woods; Cassivelaunus goes with them, but his spirit is broken.

His envoys seek him out and bring him news that the plans of the kings of Kent have not succeeded; the Britons have not burned the fleet, the legion defended it too well. The Romans have killed Lugotrix, brave Lugotrix is dead! Then Cassivelaunus's heart broke. All is over, his dreams are shattered. He had had such visions!

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“Submit,” said the voice within him, “Caesar is not more unkind than those for whom you did so much; you fought and schemed for them and they have proved false to you.”

And so he went forth and found Caesar in his tent. Caesar was curious to meet this great warrior. He had perceived him in the midst of the battle, he had heard him encouraging his troops, he had beheld him like a restless spirit here, there and everywhere, but he had never talked to him. He felt he would have done the same as Cassivelaunus did, and he accepted his submission as one magnanimous soul accepts it from another. “You will promise never to take up arms against Rome,” he said, and Cassivelaunus in the bitterness of his heart agreed.

“I promise never more to fight against Rome,” he said, and he kept his word. Caesar wished to leave Britain, for the winter was upon him, and out of respect for his adversary, imposed no hard condition. He asked for hostages and for slaves, but that was all.

Cicero wrote to his brother: “There is no gold, no corn, nothing in Britain but slaves.” He forgot the pearls, for Britain was famous for its pearls, and Caesar had a corselet made for Venus, the patron goddess of the house of Julius. What was more precious than pearls and gold was the valour of the Britons, the splendid bravery of their warrior king. Caesar had conquered much, but he knew that he had left unconquered the island set in the silver sea.



NEARLY eighty years elapsed before another hated Roman soldier was seen in Britain. He had gone, they said, for ever, and we can imagine that in the huts stories of the invasion were told again and again. As they sat by the sacred home fire the Britons were never weary of telling how the Roman had tried to wrest from Britain its loved independence, and how the gods had fought for them—Perkunos, Toutates and Belisama. Whatever the Romans might say, they had been defeated, they had to fly. The Mothers had heard their prayers and had defended their homes, the Druids had called to heaven and it had answered. They told again and again how the sea-god had bidden the waves rise and destroy the Roman ships, how these had been lashed and broken by the power of the tempest, how Cassivelaunus, their great war-king, had harassed the Romans, and how his charioteers had nearly won the day.

“Learn how to drive the chariots,” said many a British mother to her son; “they will keep Britain safe.”

Report came that Augustus, the great Roman Caesar, would not invade Britain, the gods would not let him.

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They had spoken to him through the mouth of Ægeria, and she had bidden him stay his hand.

The kings were jealous of Cassivelaunus and they were the cause of his ultimate defeat. If they had but remained faithful to him all would have been well. Thus reasonably the people spoke to one another, and yet they acted without reason. As of yore tribe fought against tribe and king against king. The Damnonii of Devonshire rose against the Corativi and the Brythons against the Brigantes, the Ordovices against the Silures, the Iceni against the Parisii. These tribes, and the others, continually warred with each other.



Head of Augustus from a
Cameo

We must think of Britain as still largely covered by immense forests, the Silva Magna, or Selwood, the Forest of Levum (Gloucestershire), the great Anderida Forest, and others. Herds of wild cattle roamed through their glades, gaunt wolves haunted the recesses, and during the hard winter weather the mothers would shudder to hear them howling in the woods around the settlements. Many a child would be snatched in its sleep, even from the side of a sleeping mother, by these ravenous and cunning beasts. They were the ancestors of the dogs for which Britain was famous, and which formed one of her most precious items of trade. There were boars and great shaggy bears. There were otters, badgers, and foxes, and the marshes were full of periwinkles, and delicious oysters, and the rivers abounded with trout and salmon. Men still fished in the sea and

EIGHTY YEARS OF PEACE

brought to land the skate and the dog-fish, and as in earliest days the poor folk were pleased to have the plentiful harvest of the trees, acorns and hazel nuts, hips and haws and the rest.

The marshes glowed with luxuriant vegetation, in which lurked the adder and other reptiles, while poisonous insects with wings like jewels flitted to and fro. The fields were harmonious with the larks, singing praises to God, as Giraldus the monk tells us. The woods, especially where the trees were thinner, were full of the song of birds, and full also of the colour of their wings—the capercailzie, with resplendent plumage, snipe and woodcock, and immense multitudes of quail. And what a rush of wings there was when, as happened frequently, a bird of prey came amongst them!

In the midst of the woods were the villages, nestling in the greenery, huts made of wattles and clay, clustering together, with roofs of rushes and grass. Round the encampment was a ditch of defence. Eboracum, our modern York, was the largest and the most important of these settlements, next to it was Verulam, now the peaceful St Albans. Then there was Camalodunum, which is Colchester, and then there was the great Londinium.

I call it “ great ” because of its magnificent destiny ; it was to be the capital of the mightiest Empire that the world has seen. Its name alone thrills one, although then it was but a place of mud and of mist, with here and there a group of round huts with roofs of rushes, where the river Thames flowed, and received many of its tributary streams. Porpoise and salmon could be caught there, and there were beds of oysters.

At the foot of the hills where the Walbrook met the Thames was the port to which came the traffic

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

from Gaul and Scandinavia, and this port was the beginning of London's greatness. As yet London had no bridge, no church, no citadel, but there was a spirit of improvement abroad even in the woods of Britain. The arts greatly improved during this time of peace. The clothing of the men and



Gold Torque found in Suffolk

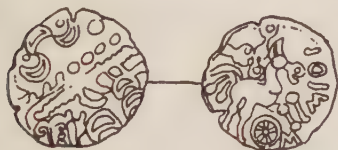
women was more elaborate, the skins were better dressed, the cloth was woven of finer texture. That worn in summer was much lighter than that worn in winter, which was rough felt or drugget. The art of dyeing was much improved and the Britons were famous for the alternate colours woven into their cloth.

The chiefs and their wives were a dazzling sight, with their magnificent ornaments, bracelets upon their arms, and torques round their necks. We know that in war the Belgæ, a tribe of German origin who dwelt on the opposite side of the English Channel, between the Rhine and the Seine, carried a shield high as a man; on each head was a horned helmet ornamented with a tall plume, and bronze cheek pieces on which were carved figures of birds or of animals. Their tunics were of pleated leather or of chain metal.

The coinage of a nation, of all its arts, is the one that best shows its progress. These small metal disks are as a lantern piercing the darkness of a far-distant time.

EIGHTY YEARS OF PEACE

Between the second landing of Caesar and the coming of Claudius there was, according to the coins, much intercourse between Britain and Rome.

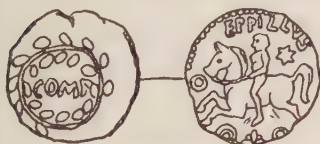


Coin of Commius

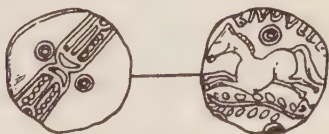


Coin of Verika

Some even think that artists had settled in Britain who had been trained either in Italy or in Gaul. In all the various districts we find these relics of a past age.



Coin of Eppilus

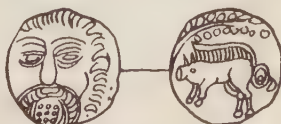


Coin of Dubnovellamus

In Wiltshire, Somersetshire and Gloucestershire, in Hampshire and Surrey, in all the territory of the different tribes we find coins of Commius and



Gold Coin of Cunobelinus



Copper Coin of Cunobelinus

of his two sons, Tincommius and Verika. In Kent we find coins of Eppilus, the third son of Commius, and of Dubnovellamus, who had gone as a suppliant to Augustus because his brother Tasciovanus

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had usurped the throne. We find in the more central district the coins of Cunobelinus, the Cymbeline of Shakespeare, whose capital was Camalodunum—now Colchester.

Taken as a whole these coins show a high degree of



Macedonian Silver Stater showing Head of Zeus

civilisation. In Verulam alone, about the time of the Christian era there were coins of six different values. There is a close likeness between them, a head on the obverse, a horse on the reverse. They are copies, more or less exact, of a coin of Philip II. of Macedon, the



Macedonian Gold Stater showing Head of Apollo

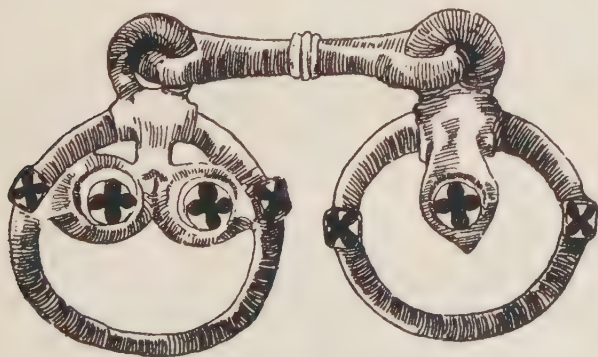
Macedonian Stater, as it is called. This is a beautiful coin, with the head of Apollo or the young Hercules on the obverse, and on the reverse a magnificent chariot, signifying conquest in the games.

These coins show that Rome was mistress of the world, that all eyes turned towards her.

The Emperor Augustus would do nothing to enlarge the Empire and during his rule no further effort was made to subdue Britain, although to all intents and purposes Britain was a province of Rome. She paid

EIGHTY YEARS OF PEACE

tribute to it, sending offerings of gold and silver, of skins, slaves and hunting dogs, irregularly, it is true, but the principle was acknowledged. Dubnovellamus journeyed to Rome to entreat Augustus to interfere on his account, but the Emperor refused his help. He had enough to do on his frontiers. His successor, Tiberius, in whose reign our Saviour was born, followed the policy of Augustus and would not go so far as Britain, that island of forests and marshes at the extremest end of the world. Then came Caligula, a boaster and a coward, and he vowed he would win Britain for Rome. His legions came to Britain's shore, but they did nothing more than fill bags with sand and shells. These were his trophies of the sea, and Caligula brought them to the Capitol. At last, in A.D. 43 Bericus, son of Commius, pleaded with the Emperor Claudius for help, and this was the cause of the third invasion of Britain.



Bronze and Enamel Bridle Bit found in England

*" And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears."*

MACAULAY.



THE ROMANS COME THE THIRD TIME

BERICUS went to the court of Caesar to tell his wrongs, how he had been driven from the throne, and to ask for Roman help. Claudius was the most stupid of all the Caesars, but his heart was set on military glory and here was the opportunity he sought. In his dreams Claudius would see himself seated in a triumphal car, a wreath of laurel round his head, and wearing his mantle of state. He would hear the people shouting his name, "Ave Caesar." "See how calm he is amidst our frenzied admiration, a worthy hero, a worthy descendant of the great Caesar," one would say to the other.

"There is no need of a slave to whisper in his ear, 'Remember thou art a man.' He has the modesty of true greatness," said another.

Claudius's head would whirl dizzily at the fancied praise. His courtiers knew his ambition, they flattered him to his heart's content. How great he was! The spirit of Julius Caesar was in him! Yes, here was the opportunity that the gods had prepared for him. He would subdue Britain; the greatest emperors had been foiled in the attempt but Claudius would be victorious.

The Britons sent an envoy demanding that Bericus be sent back, his wrongs were imaginary. But the ambition of Claudius had been fired.

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

"Tell your people," he said to the envoy, "that Claudius protects Bericus. He will put him back on the throne."

The envoy was dismissed, fury in his heart. The third invasion of Britain would take place.

"Do not go," said the courtiers to Claudius; "so great a man as your Majesty is must not expose himself to danger. Let Aulus Plautius go."

Aulus Plautius was sent for from Gaul; and he undertook the commission, promising that he would send for the Emperor should the difficulties prove too great for him.

The legions were chosen, the 2nd, the 9th and the 14th. Aulus Plautius assembled them and told them they were to invade Britain once more, to them was entrusted the glorious task of subduing her. But the troops rebelled, they did not wish to go. Britain, they said, was a place beyond the civilised world, a place of marshes and mist without sunshine—they would not go. In vain did Aulus Plautius temporise with them; not even the hope of glory and of gain had power to move them. At last came a freedman—Narcissus by name, sent by Claudius to conciliate them. He was received with jeers by the rebellious troops. "It is not holiday time, when the slave can take the place of the master," they said. But at last they were prevailed upon to go—it was autumn before Aulus Plautius could set forth.

Meantime the Britons had been lulled into security. For nearly a hundred years no foreigner, no hated Roman, had come over; the gods themselves had fought for Britain. Tidings of the rebellion of the legions had reached the Britons and they rejoiced in



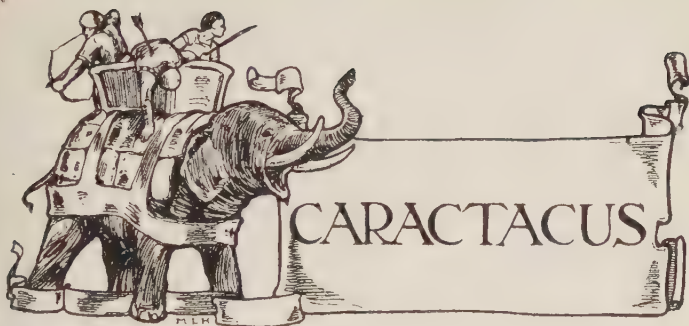
In vain did Aulus Plautius temporise

THE ROMANS AGAIN

the belief that they were safe ; none would dare attack them. They continued their squabbles amongst themselves, therefore, chief against chief, and they did not even choose a war-king. Suddenly the fleet of the Romans appeared ; the revolt of the legions had been quelled !



*" See the conquering **H**ero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums."*



CARACTACUS, son of Cunobelin, was the most important and powerful of all the British kings. He was not appointed war-king as Cassivelaunus had been, but he became so by right divine of his bravery. Upon the appearance of the Romans he became the rallying point of the Britons, and with them he retreated to the marshes and forests. His followers fought splendidly, defending their land inch by inch, harassing the invaders with their chariots as they fell back. On a day they encamped near a great river, which river we do not know; it was probably the Medway. They thought the position impregnable, but among the invaders were some Batavian soldiers, skilful swimmers, who plunged into the water, heavily armed as they were, and soon reached the other side. At their approach the Britons fled, disappearing once more into their woods. The brother of Caractacus was slain, and over his body Caractacus and the Britons swore to avenge his death.

The Britons fell back upon the Thames, somewhere between London and the sea, believing that here the

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

river was too wide for the enemy to cross. The invaders overcame the obstacle ; they ventured into the water, careless of attack from the opposite shore. Once more the Britons fled into their forest fastnesses, hard pressed by Vespasian, a man set apart for high destinies. On one occasion the Romans, rash in their pursuit, got entangled in the marshes of Essex and lost many men.

The Britons were of unconquerable spirit ; it was a hard task to compel them to submit. Time passed and little of moment was achieved. Aulus Plautius had promised to send for the Emperor should great difficulties arise ; now a crisis had come. He planned to attack Camalodunum (Colchester), and he waited for Caesar at Londinium. Some say the general waited at the spot upon which at a later date the beginning of the city was built, but Sir Walter Besant believed that he waited at Westminster or at Lambeth. Londinium was still a morass, marshes to the right, to the left, in front of her, and behind was the impassable forest of Middlesex. It is probable that Aulus Plautius waited at Thorney, or on the other side of the river at Lambeth.

Upon receiving his general's summons Claudius started at once and crossed Gaul. There was an Oriental splendour in his progress ; elephants clad in mail marched with his army. He did not pause until, having crossed the Channel, he joined Aulus Plautius, and together they marched towards Camalodunum. This was nothing more than a large village of huts made of wattles and clay clustering round the great house with its courtyard, in the green shades of the wood ; there were no ramparts round it. Caractacus offered a



An Altar was raised to Claudius and he was called divine

CARACTACUS

splendid defence. Amidst the verdure and fragrance of the woods rose the thunder of his voice reminding his followers of the deeds of their ancestors, and calling upon them to choose death rather than slavery. White-robed Druids and wild-eyed Druidesses were there to aid in encouraging the Britons. But all in vain the valour and the disregard of death, the hurrying hither and thither of the chariots! The ill-armed Britons could not prevail against the mail-clad elephants of Claudius. The huge beasts spread dismay as they crashed through the British ranks, trampling upon their foes and bearing on their backs towers from which slingers and bowmen rained stones and arrows. Camalodunum was taken, and again Caractacus fled for refuge to the tangled thickets of the wood.

After the capture of Camalodunum many tribes submitted and (A.D. 43) Claudius went back to Rome in triumph. His day-dreams had become reality. He had pictured himself as being hailed by the multitude the greatest Caesar that had sat on the Roman throne, and the fulfilment of his vision had come. A ship like a moving palace met him at Marseilles, the Senate greeted him with the title of Britannicus and crowned him with the naval crown of gold. He was the conqueror of the ocean, "the furthest seas had been brought within the circuit of the Empire." "The world is girt by a Roman sea," sang a poet. At his triumph, when he went to the Capitol to thank the gods for his success, he was preceded in the procession by the statues of his ancestors and by numerous rich gifts, the offerings of the provinces. He wore the general's uniform of purple and was crowned with oak leaves. In his hand

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he carried the ivory sceptre. Behind him, marching on foot, came his chief officers, and throughout the route the crowd greeted him with enthusiastic cheers. The next day there were games in the circus, and on the third day came the cruel sports that were specially dear to the Romans. A model of Camalodunum had been prepared and thousands of British captives perished in the mimic siege. Meantime in the real village an altar had been raised to the Caesar and the Roman soldiers called him the divine Claudius.

While these things were happening Caractacus was putting forth frantic efforts to sustain the courage of his people and to nourish in them the spirit of independence. The same love of country that had inspired Cassivelaunus fired his soul. The wild freedom of Britain, its endless woods, their pathless tracts, what stranger dared dream of desecrating them! He moved like a spirit from tribe to tribe. He went to the Silures, whose country was North Wales. That indomitable race had not bowed its head to the Roman yoke. He was, as it were, the embodied spirit of its pride, and they made him their king. He taught them how to fight, and they swore to obey him. And meanwhile through the groves and the woods went up the prayers of the Druids invoking the gods to fight with Caractacus for Britain.



HAVE you heard of the Blowing Stone, a great stone pierced with holes, each at measured distance from the other? This stone, when blown into, gives forth a wail, eerie, wild, reaching far and wide. "It is the call, from whence does it come, we must follow it," said those who heard it. I have seen such a stone, I have heard it blown into, and its wild screech still lingers on my ear as it must have haunted the Romans, for its sound constantly rent the air during the years when Britain was the battlefield of invader and invaded.

After the departure of Claudius, Aulus Plautius remained in Britain as consul, but the brunt of the fighting was done by Vespasian. For eight years Caractacus withstood the legions. It is said that in four years Vespasian fought thirty battles, took twenty towns, conquered two powerful tribes and the Isle of Wight. But still Britain, led by Caractacus, was unconquered. In 47 A.D. Aulus Plautius was recalled to enjoy his triumph, the last accorded to a subject. Claudius walked with him to the Capitol.

His successor was Publius Ostorius Scapula, who did not put an appearance in Britain till the year 50.

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During the interval Caractacus was busy, feeding the national spirit, teaching the arts of war, labouring to unite the tribes. Noble patriot, we still see him through the ages working, hoping, believing, striving for his country. And with him were the Druids, invoking the gods to protect Britain from her foes. It was in vain. The legions when they came proved too strong. The spot chosen by Caractacus in which to give battle is not known with certainty, but I have seen one that takes to itself the glory of that memorable day. It is one of the Malvern Hills, with grassy terraces marking the entrenchments on its steep slopes. I like to think that here the terrible encounter took place. I like to think of those desperate men impelled by one love, by one hope, working to set their country free.

“It is your last chance of freedom,” said Caractacus, “your wives, your children still are your own. Let the enemy vanquish you and they are yours no longer.”

The men answered with wild cheers. They would work and fight to the death. So formidable was their aspect on the frowning hilltop that Ostorius Scapula hesitated to give battle. But the cohorts were impatient; they would go, so he let them ascend. With measured tramp they moved to the attack; they were met with missiles, with stones hurled at them, with fearful cries. Still they tramped up the hillside with deliberate pace, their javelins poised, their shields protecting them. But the missiles were hard to face, and many fell that day upon the slopes. At last the Romans formed a tortoise and reached the brow of the hill. Caractacus made frantic efforts to rally his followers, reminding them that their freedom and all that made

BETRAYAL

life sweet was at stake. They answered with yells and launched their chariots.

The stronghold was rushed, hand-to-hand fighting succeeded the calm march of the legions. The Britons with their long weapons were no match at close quarters for the Romans with their short and deadly swords. Soon the day was decided, and the Britons fled, hard pressed by the invaders. Caractacus determined to seek refuge with the Brigantes, whose queen, Cartismandua, and her husband, Venutius, were his friends. He heard that his wife and daughter Claudia were prisoners and his heart burnt within him.

Cartismandua was Queen of the Brigantes, whose capital was Eboracum (York). She lived in a house made of wicker, her milk-white flocks pastured around. Her collar and her headdress were of gold, her chariot was enamelled. She loved wealth and power, she wished to be Caesar's friend. Long had she brooded over the question: how could she win his friendship? She would deliver Caractacus to him. But her husband, Venutius, would not share her plots against the chieftain, and they had high words about it. "He is a patriot," he said. The Queen looked her scorn. "He plunges Britain into constant warfare," she replied. The proud queen might well be the original of Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth.

Caractacus arrived tattered and travel worn, the thongs of his sandals discoloured with gore, his restless eyes bloodshot with visions of vengeance. He dreamt he would have Cartismandua for an ally and that together they would free the country from the Romans. The Queen went forth to meet him, magnificently dressed; she had put on her golden ornaments, her

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

mantle was of a wondrous shimmering material. She greeted the defeated king with a smile which was like sunshine, and took him by the hand to lead him in. When he was inside, the portals of her hall were closed and at a signal from the Queen the hero was surrounded. He was disarmed and heavy chains were hung about him. For a moment he wondered. Was she not his ally? Then he knew he was betrayed. His hands that wielded the sword were now manacled, his restless feet were chained.

In vain that desperate flight through the tangled woods. In vain the prayers of the women to Toutates, the invocation of the Druids to the gods. He was betrayed, and by a woman in whom he trusted.





IN Rome the multitude was waiting for Caractacus. A great crowd was assembled in its streets, its squares and places; the field of Mars was thronged. In front of the tribune on which the Emperor Claudius and the beautiful Agrippina were seated upon chairs of state, the Prætorian Guard was drawn up, and behind the thrones were the standards.

“It is an indignity,” said the soldiers; “no woman has a right to sit in front of the eagles that have led Rome to victory,” but Agrippina scoffed at their murmurs. Was she not the ruler of Rome? Her hair rippled from her temples under her diadem of gold, her cloak was fastened at her shoulders by golden ornaments, her gold-sandalled feet peeped from under her dress of white. Claudius wore the Imperial crown and mantle: he was anxious to see the patriot, the brave champion who had faced the invincible legions for upward of eight years. Agrippina, too, would fain see the hero, for her heart was valiant notwithstanding its wickedness.

There was a great stir amongst the multitude, for

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the procession was approaching. Here was Caractacus himself, calm and cold, laden with chains, but walking erect. The mothers held up their little ones to look at him as he passed. "See," they said, "this is the man who has kept the legions of Rome in check for eight years: he was betrayed by a woman." In front of Caractacus walked his brothers, his wife and daughter, the beautiful Claudia, of matchless grace, of whom the poets sang. Before them were carried the golden collars, the decorations which Caractacus had won in war from the tribes of Britain. When the captives came to where Caesar and Agrippina were sitting they fell prostrate before them, all but Caractacus, who remained standing.

He had been thinking of Britain as he walked through that splendid city with its splendid sunshine, its lovely villas, its marvellous monuments, its well-dressed citizens. He had been thinking of the land he loved, of her fragrant woods, of her desolate marshes, of her half-naked people always at war with each other, tribe against tribe, king against king. What was it that made Rome so powerful? Was it not that her subjects were united and that they obeyed the laws? Caractacus wondered how a city so great as this should envy the poor huts of his native land.

"Speak," said Claudius; "I give you leave to speak."

Tacitus the historian, who has described this scene, gives us the discourse which Caractacus delivered. His voice rang through the field of Mars, and all his auditors were silent that they might not lose a word he spoke:

"Had my moderation in prosperity," he said, "been equal to my noble birth and fortune, I should have entered this city as your friend rather than as your captive; and you would not have disdained to welcome



Caractacus remained standing

CARACTACUS IN ROME

as an ally a king of illustrious descent who ruled many nations. My present lot is as glorious to you as it is degrading to myself. I had horses, soldiers, arms and wealth. What wonder if I was loth to part with them ! You are indeed determined to rule the whole world ; but does it follow that all the world is to welcome servitude ? Had I at once surrendered to your power neither my fall nor your triumph would have gained their present distinction. Put me to death and my whole story will be forgotten. Spare me, and your clemency will be remembered for ever."

When he had finished speaking a great shout arose from the people.

" Pardon him ! " they cried, " pardon him for his bravery ! "

Claudius was very weak and very vain, but he had generous impulses. He pardoned Caractacus and his family on condition that they should never visit Britain again.

" Never," swore the patriot ; " my home shall be Rome."

Agrippina, who admired heroism wherever she found it, approved of her husband's clemency, and Caractacus went freely forth in the streets of Rome. Claudia, his daughter, who sprang, as the poet Martial wrote, " from a long line of painted kings," and was as beautiful as a Greek goddess, married Pudens, and it is believed became a Christian. Can this be the Claudia mentioned by St Paul in 2 Timothy iv. 21 : " Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren " ?

BOADICEA

WHEN the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath the spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief ;
Every burning word he spoke
Full of rage and full of grief.

Princess ! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt ;
Perish, hopeless and abhorred,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Caesar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway ;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow :
Rushed to battle, fought, and died ;
Dying, hurled them at the foe.

WILLIAM COWPER.



THE air was full of omens, strange sights had been seen, strange sounds had been heard. The sea was tinged with blood ; when the tide went out shapes were left on the shore. The Roman statue of Victory fell ; a moaning was heard in the Council Chamber—what did it mean ? men asked each other, pale with fear.

The Romans governed the Britons with cruelty : they treated them as slaves or prisoners of war ; they thrust them from their land ; they burdened them with taxes ; they sent their sons to serve in other countries. The people groaned under the tyranny of their oppressors.

A notable instance of this tyranny is to be seen in their treatment of the family of the King of the Iceni, Prasutagus. This king was possessed of great wealth, and when he came to die he divided his treasures between the Emperor of Rome, Boadicea his wife, and his daughters. He thought thus to satisfy the greed of the Romans, but it was a vain hope. No sooner was he dead than his treasures were seized ; Boadicea was scourged with rods, his daughters were treated as slaves.

The high and fierce spirit of Boadicea would not

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brook the insult. She assembled the chiefs and her subjects together and spoke eloquently of her wrongs. She told them of the indignity to herself, and showed them her scars. She pointed to her daughters. Then she reminded them of how the common people and the chiefs were robbed of their property and burdened with unjust taxes ; of how the Druids, their sages and priests, were slain by the impious Romans. Would they submit to it? "The gods are fighting for us," she continued ; "they are fighting for Britain. Are you men to stand idly by? Is the spirit of Cassivelaunus dead?"

Scarcely could she finish for the cry of indignation that arose from the assembly, and chiefs and people swore that they would follow wherever she led.

Boadicea was tall and largely built, her bright red hair reached down to her knees ; her tunic was of many colours, her mantle was fastened by a golden brooch, disks of gold shone at her breast, her bracelets and her torque were of gold. Her sombre eyes were filled with the light of revenge, her features were set with hatred and resolve. She was like a lioness whose whelps have been slain. With her daughters crouching at her feet she drove from place to place in her chariot, exhorting the tribes to join the rebel army.

"I will lead you against the tyrants. They have maltreated my children. They have robbed me of my kingdom. They would make slaves of us all," she cried in every place.

At last, at the head of a great army she rode in her chariot, her daughters beside her, to Camalodunum. From the north and from the east the tribes hurried to join her. Britain was in full revolt. The chieftains

THE WARRIOR QUEEN

and the men took their wives and children, long lines of chariots came through the woods, and over the plains. The Roman colony was dismayed and entreated reinforcements. Two hundred men were sent to them. Then came the British Queen, followed by her long train, and the Romans shut themselves up in the temple.

“It is the temple of the divine Claudius,” cried the Queen scornfully; “the man whose hand was heavy against us. He is called divine. It is an insult to our gods. Wreck and destroy it.”

With yells the British fell upon the sanctuary, their wives and children adding wild shrieks to the unearthly din. The siege lasted two days, when the temple fell, and every Roman inside was slaughtered. It was razed to the ground, and amidst shouts of execration the godlike statue of Claudius was broken in pieces and trampled underfoot. The Queen was triumphant; her army was intoxicated with victory, and still through the woods the chariots continued to come.

The Romans were quick to realise the dangerous situation, and the 12th legion was sent to face the victorious foe. But the spirit of the Britons was up, they turned upon the legion and cut it to pieces, the cavalry alone escaped. The Britons of the East were free!

Suetonius heard of this disaster to the 12th legion. Was Britain about to be lost to Rome? It was a matter of life and death. At the head of the 14th legion he marched off at once by the Roman route to Londinium, a very different place from what it was when we saw it last. Merchants and their families now dwelt in it, besides the men whom they employed. Suetonius

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hesitated as to where he would give battle. With tears and lamentations the inhabitants of the city entreated him to remain with them. They would be murdered, they said, if he left them to their fate, for they had accepted the Roman customs and had lost their nationality. But Suetonius felt he was not strong enough to defend the city, and he made up his mind not to wait for the enemy here. No sooner had he gone than the Britons, led by Boadicea, rushed in. The Queen came in her chariot, with her daughters at her feet, a terrible figure, looking like the spirit of vengeance.

"Slay them," she commanded, and the Britons slew those who were there. Men, women and children, none were spared.

Verulam had no better fate. The Britons closed upon it and the inhabitants were butchered. Seventy thousand in all were killed in Camalodunum, in Londinium, and in Verulam.

Suetonius now resolved to give battle without further delay, and he chose a site where he might have the advantage of position. We do not know the place, but it is believed to have been on the road between Camalodunum and Londinium. Forcing his way through the forest he emerged at the mouth of a ravine. Around him, in a plain bordered by hills, lay the enemy, a vast host. Far as the eye could see there were chariots, and the wives and the daughters of the Britons were with the host. Through the ranks of that great multitude, eager for battle, rode Boadicea, her hair loose, in her hand a spear: a very spirit of wrath. At her feet, as ever, crouched her daughters.

"This day is ours," she cried. "Look at your numbers: they alone would make you irresistible.

THE WARRIOR QUEEN

These tyrant Romans are cravens for all their strength. Remember how they have scourged me ! Look at your king's daughters—treated like the vilest of slaves ! Remember the successes you have won—how you drove the great Caesar across the seas ! Remember the vows of vengeance you have made. Be men now and we will yet drive the Romans from our shores ! ” Her face grew sterner : the deep tones of her voice sounded like that of doom. From the folds of her dress she loosed a hare, the sacred animal of the Britons, and watched it as it ran. The Britons uttered yells and shrieks at the omen—the day would be theirs !

Suetonius on the other side addressed his men. He told them that the barbarians were rather women than soldiers. They would give way the moment they saw their conquerors. “ It is ever a small force that wins the battle, and the smallness of your numbers in comparison with that of your enemies will enhance the glory of your conquest ! Close up your ranks—do not attack, discharge your javelins when I give the signal. Then with shield and sword complete your work of destruction. ”

The speech was received with enthusiasm and the clangour of arms. The Britons responded by louder cries and a wilder clash of weapons.

The legion stood together—a serried mass of men with javelins poised. When the Celtic rush began to lose something of its impetus, Suetonius gave the word of command, and in the shape of a wedge the legion advanced, scattering the Britons to right and to left. They fell pell mell before the resistless advance, for their clumsy weapons were of no avail against the short swords of the legionaries. Once more Roman skill and

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

Roman discipline won a complete victory. The hordes were panic-stricken ; they turned and fled in disorder ; in the confusion they became entangled amongst the chariots which had been standing in the rear. The flying Britons saw their women and their children slaughtered, they saw comrade after comrade go down. Boadicea cried to the gods to help the Britons, but in vain. She tried to rally them but the rout was complete. Suetonius had vowed that the blood of eighty thousand Britons should flow for the seventy thousand Romans who had been slain. The wide plains were soaked in blood, the country became a scene of massacre. Then Boadicea, calling to high heaven to avenge the Britons against the oppressors of their country, against the robbers of the poor, drank poison. Rather than fall into Roman hands she took the fearful draught and her avenging spirit was released.

The struggle was now practically over. Britain was subjugated and its fields, its woods, its ancient settlements fell as prey to the Romans. Its chiefs and its people had lost their independence and the Roman grip was firmly upon them.



LONDINIUM (London) was now very different from what it had been when we were first introduced to it as a huge marsh with birds singing above it, great fishes swimming in its depths and reeds growing in abundance everywhere. But still the Thames overflowed its banks, and many tributary streams ran through what now are important thoroughfares. There were ranges of low hills covered with vegetation, and behind was the great forest. At low tide the huge morass showed the islands with which it was dotted, Thorney Island being the largest. This was never quite covered. We know that the merchants tramped across it with merchandise on their way to Thanet; we know how hunters in the forest discovered a spot where the marsh did not reach. It was at the foot of two hills overlooking the Walbrook, one of the streams that emptied itself in the big serpent-like river. There they built a citadel and they called it Lyn-din.

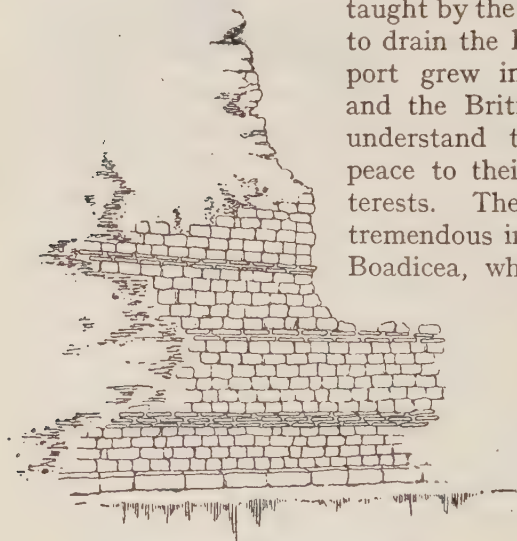
I have shown how the building of this citadel revolutionised Londinium. Piles were dug in the foreshore and a quay was built. Henceforth the merchants, instead of tramping over Thorney, brought what they

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had for sale to the port. The ships from Gaul, from Germany, from other parts of the world, would come sailing over the sea and anchor in Londinium. Gradually the Britons made the quays larger by driving more piles into the mud. The marsh, too, was partly drained,

for the inhabitants had been taught by the Romans how to drain the land. So the port grew in importance and the British began to understand the value of peace to their trading interests. Then came the tremendous insurrection of Boadicea, when Suetonius

disregarded the entreaties of the citizens and left them to be slaughtered by the Warrior Queen and her followers.



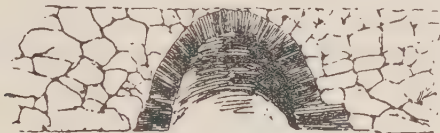
A Bit of the old Roman Wall of London

After this the Romans felt the necessity of fortifying Londinium.

The Romans established themselves in the port and changed its name to Augusta. They further drained and built over the marsh. Amongst other buildings they raised a great citadel with walls as thick and frowning as that which they had erected at Pevensey. I wonder if you know Pevensey? It was one of the

THE IMPERIAL CITY

Roman garrison towns on the Kentish coast. It lies between Eastbourne and Hastings, and we can still see



Arch of Aqueduct under Roman Wall

the ruin of this terrible fortress. The walls that are standing are of extraordinary strength and solidity ; even in their decay they make us feel the power of the conquering nation.

Looking on this mighty pile we can imagine the citadel built by the Romans in Augusta. It was placed on the high ground east of the Walbrook : it extended on one side from Cornhill to the river, on the other side from Mincing Lane to the port which it protected. It was quadrangular, set with circular bastions, about 760 yards in length, and about 500 yards in



Part of Roman Wall at Pevensey

breadth, with a great ditch on the northern side.

Then the Romans built a bridge of wood on the site of the London Bridge of to-day. It was a military bridge, intended to connect the citadel with the south.

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The date when London Bridge was built has long been a matter of discussion. Some say it was built before the time of Boadicea, but if so there would have been no great massacre of the inhabitants, since they would have been able to fly to the moorlands and the forest.

“ Build it up with wood and clay,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee ;
Build it up with wood and clay,
With a gay lady.

Wood and clay will wash away,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee ;
Wood and clay will wash away,
With a gay lady.

Build it up with stone so strong,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee ;
Huzza ’twill last for ages long,
With a gay lady.’¹

Augusta was divided on the east and western side of the Walbrook into a rich and poor quarter ; there was also the commercial quarter where stood the houses belonging to the merchants. The better classes dwelt on the eastern side of the Walbrook, on the western side were the houses of the lower classes and the warehouses of the merchants. Behind these quays were the places for the reception of slaves, behind these again were the villas and their pretty gardens where the merchants dwelt. In the shadow of the citadel houses and villas with streets sprang up. The general who was Governor of Augusta made the citadel his headquarters, and slept within its enclosure. There were also the Treasury, the Council of Justice, and the Arsenal, together with

THE IMPERIAL CITY

the offices of the civic administration, and to the latter the taxes were brought. The rest of the city was a trading city, the citadel was the centre of its official and military life.

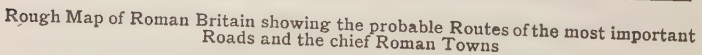
All the commerce of Britain passed through Augusta. Across the river was the suburb of Southwark, where the houses were built on piles. Four great Roman roads connected the city with every part of the island. These four roads were Watling Street, Ermine Street, the Fosse Way, and Icknield Way. The best known of these is Watling Street. It traversed England in a zig-zag route from Kent to Chester and York, dividing northward in two branches to Carlisle and the neighbourhood of Newcastle. Ermine Street led direct from Augusta to Lincoln, with a branch to Doncaster and York. The Fosse Way ran diagonally through Bath to Lincoln. Icknield Way curved inland from Norwich to Dunstable, and thence to the coast at Southampton. These main roads were connected by side roads in Wales. They were numerous, but I will not confuse you by giving their names. It is enough to say that the whole country was intersected by roads connecting all the principal towns and fortresses with the southern coast.

These Roman roads included the military roads. It was an immense work, but a very necessary one, for a country without roads is impassable; troops cannot march through it, stores cannot be conveyed, news cannot be carried from one place to another. The Romans opened up the country by making a perfect network of roadways, and these had a most important



Roman Roofing
Tile

part in the subjugation of the country. The work of constructing these roadways went on for upward of three centuries: through the forests they hewed them,



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they were about eighteen feet wide and raised above the surface of the neighbouring land. There was a slight elevation in the middle to enable the rain to drain off on either side, that the road might dry quickly. They were very carefully built, and it will be interesting to us to examine their construction. First the workmen cut down the trees of the big forests through which the roads were to go, then they dug deep down till they came to firm earth. This was the foundation of the road and it was well beaten in. On it was placed



Courtyard of a Roman Villa at Chester

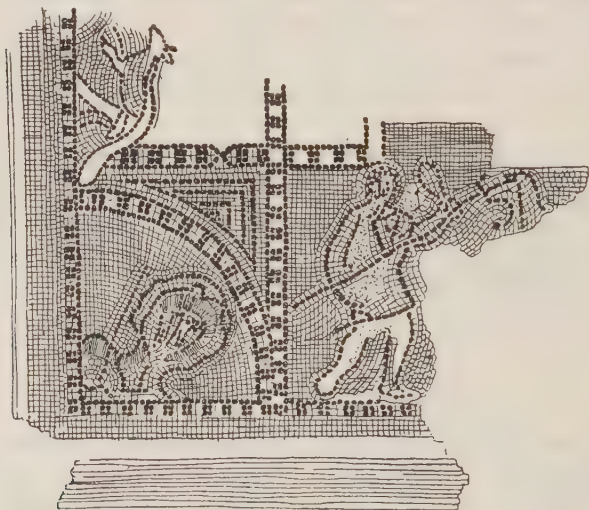
the bed of the road—large stones sometimes mixed with mortar, and with gravel, limestone and clay. On top of this was placed a mixture formed of lime and chalk pounded with brick or tile, and above was the stone paving of the causeway. These roads were destined to last for ever, and where the hand of man has not destroyed them their solid foundations are still unimpaired.

The merchants journeyed on these highways, bringing their merchandise of iron, skins, slaves and hunting dogs to the Port of Augusta, taking back what they had received there in exchange from the foreign traders, Gauls, Phœnicians, Germans, who brought rich stuffs,

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perfumes, glass of many colours, statues, musical instruments—all that was necessary to the civilised life led by the Romans in Britain.

How splendid it all was compared to what it had been. We must fancy Augusta with villas stately and beautiful, the habitation of the rich and noble. There



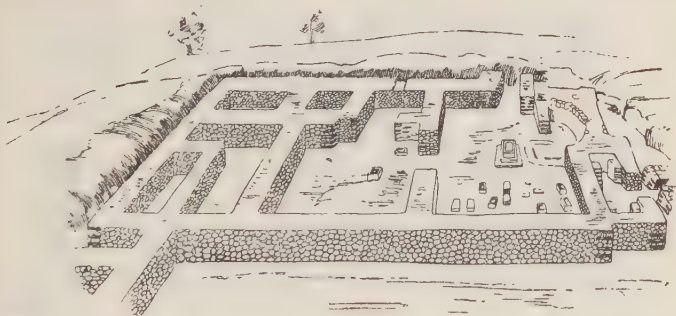
Portion of Mosaic Pavement found in the Ruins of a Roman Villa
at Brading, Isle of Wight

dwelt the proud centurion with his wife and children, served by slaves. The people of less importance had villas smaller but always lovely. You can still see the remains of these villas, not in London only, but up and down the country ; at Brading in the Isle of Wight, in York, in Chester, in Bath, wherever you go you may find them.

I will try to give you an idea of what these habitations

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were like where lived the children in whose blood was the sunshine of Italy, and whose spirits drooped in our misty land. In these villas at least the little ones found the beauty they had been accustomed to in their remote homes. The Roman villa had a large open courtyard, the walls of which were partly of wood and partly of stone. This opened out on many rooms. The roof was made of shingle or of tiles, the floor was a beautiful mosaic. One room was especially beautiful.



Remains of Roman Villa excavated in Kent

It looked like an immense flower with its scrolls and garlands, and little loves dancing with nymphs. In some the mosaic represented a great mythological story, such as Orpheus playing on his lute, Actæon pursued by his hounds. Orpheus represented Rome and the wild beasts the peoples Rome had conquered. The colours were rich and vivid ; reds and blues, slate colour and chocolate, were the favourite hues.

In the Guildhall museum at London you may see many mosaics such as I have described, blue, pink, brown, the mosaics that the children loved because they reminded them of their beloved Italy.

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The rooms on the west side were usually the chambers of the slaves and servants. On the other side were the rooms of the master of the house, his family and friends. In some of the finer villas there was a smaller courtyard, surrounded by a gallery, and beyond this courtyard a hall decorated with mosaics, in which were placed the statues, the paintings, the vases and glass, and all the exquisite ware in use. Under the floor was



Remains of Hypocaust (Pillars 3 ft. high) found in ruined Roman Villa in Chester

the hypocaust where the fires burned for heating the air which warmed all the chambers.

Perhaps you have not heard of the hypocaust? It was an arrangement for heating placed under the floor but raised from the ground between two and four feet. Its floor consisted of tiles or flags placed upon a quantity of little brick or chalk pillars. On this a fire of wood was kept burning and an opening in the outside wall of the house acted as chimney; the heat and smoke from the fire passed under the floor, between the little pillars and behind the walls.

The bathrooms played an important part in the house-

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hold economy. At first there were cold baths only ; the hot baths came into use when the Romans grew more luxurious. Many chambers were devoted to the bath-rooms for undressing ; for keeping oils and unguents ; rooms for games ; a cold room for cold bathing ; a tepid room, and finally the *caldarium* or hot room used as a sweating bath : this room had low



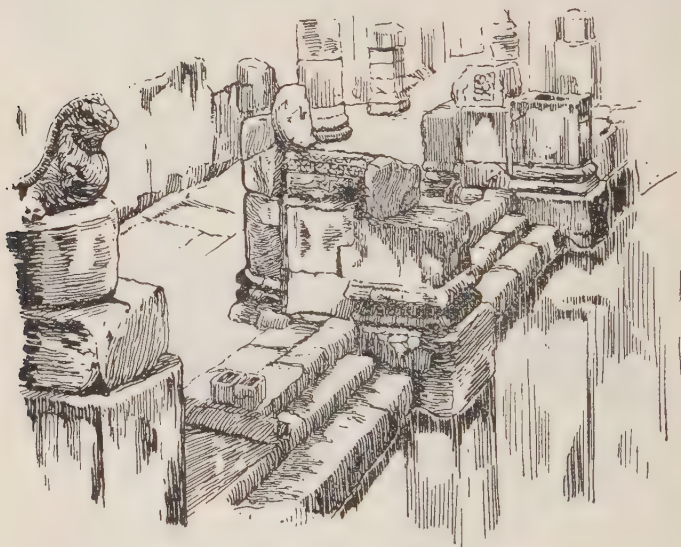
Ruins of Roman Hot Bath at Aquæ Solis (Bath). Only the Bath is old, the surrounding Structure is modern

walls, and was heated on all sides with hot air. In the centre of this room there was often a bath filled with cold water fed by a stream. The bath was usually thirty feet long with a low step rounded at the edge. The Romans spent hours every day in the water ; they enjoyed the splash, the delight of freedom from clothing, the perfect liberty of movement.

We can form no idea of what the Romans understood by the word bath, from our knowledge of what the

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term means to us, to-day. There were baths for men and women. The Roman bath—I speak now of the public bath—was a place of amusement quite as much as a place to wash in. It was a club, a recreation ground, a conversation room, in fact everything that

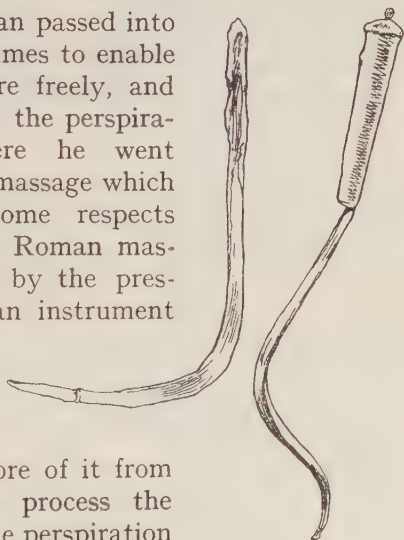


Ruins of Roman Hot Bath at Aquæ Solis (Bath)

might enable men or women to pass the time pleasantly. As a bath it bore a general resemblance to what is known as the Turkish bath to-day. It would be more true to say the Turkish bath bears a general resemblance to the Roman as, no doubt, it is but the Roman modified by time and usage. The main differences are these: in the Roman bath perspiration was promoted either by exercise or by contact with heated air or by both,

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while in the modern Turkish bath, as we know it, perspiration is induced by heat alone. The Roman went often to his bath, as we might go to the tennis-court, or the cricket-field, or as we might join in a good spin in a rowing eight—simply to get into a healthy perspiration. From the game room the Roman passed into the *caldarium*, sometimes to enable him to perspire more freely, and in any case to have the perspiration removed. Here he went through a process of massage which again differed in some respects from our own. The Roman massage was performed by the pressure of the strigil, an instrument with which the body was scraped both to remove the perspiration and, by pressure, to force more of it from the pores. In our process the strigil is not used; the perspiration is removed wholly by soap and water and the necessary pressure for stimulating it is applied by hand. Then the bather took a dip into the cold water bath, and finally, on leaving the *caldarium*, he passed into other rooms, where he resumed his dress and cooled off in lower temperatures. The strigil and the amusements were the main points in which the old system differed from the one now in use.

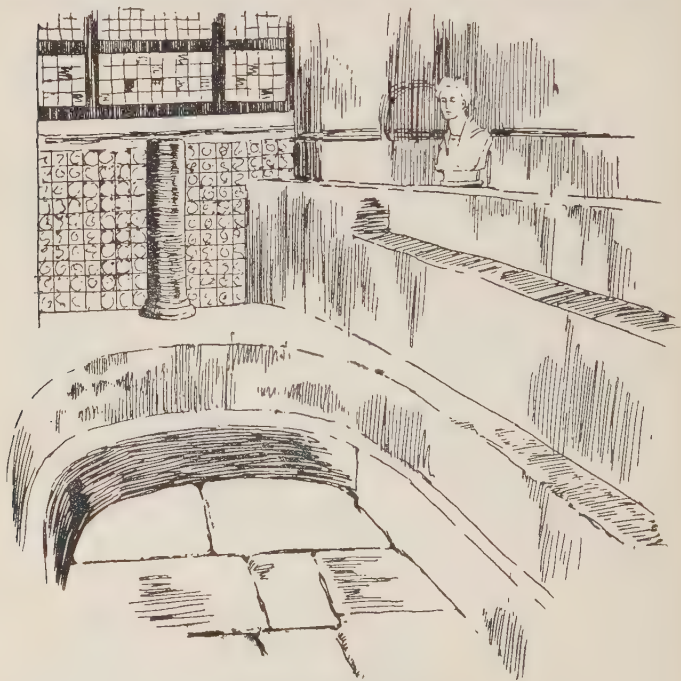


Roman Strigils

The private bathroom was built according to the

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means of the owner of the villa. In some the bathroom was entirely lined with marble. There were the bathrooms of the master of the house, and those of the lady of the house. They had walls and seats where,



Roman Bath in London

after being in the water, the bathers could sit with their friends, enjoying perfect relaxation. There is a Roman bath to be seen in London to this day. It is situated near the Strand and formed part of a private mansion built outside the city on the slope of a hill where a grassy field was traversed by half-a-dozen tiny

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streams. The toilet was a most elaborate affair, especially for Roman women. After the bath which I have described to you, the lady's slave came into the room with a strigil—an iron knife with the edge turned sideways—and anointed and scraped her. Afterwards, in her dressing-room, slaves armed with tweezers, others with tooth-picks, and with ear instruments, proceeded to their work. From the room devoted to the storage of oils and cosmetics, preserved in coloured glass bottles, and soaps stamped with the maker's name, they took what was necessary; her eyebrows were stencilled, she was perfumed with sweet oils and adorned with cosmetics. The lady next proceeded to her private room, where we may imagine her reclining on a couch, supported by cushions, whilst a slave holds a mirror before her. Another slave attended to the dressing of her hair, which was a matter of great importance, for the position of every curl must be considered.

We must not omit reference to the religious



Tweezers'

Earpick

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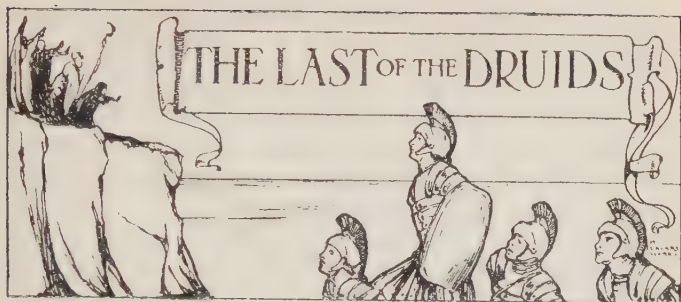
life of Augusta. In Thorney, where Westminster Abbey now stands, was the temple of Apollo. A temple to Diana stood on the site of St Paul's Cathedral ; there were also temples to Mercury, to the Sun-god, to Baal, and to the Mothers. If we imagine some religious festival in the city we shall see the proud centurion and his officers making their way to the temple of the god whose festival they are celebrating. We shall see the Roman ladies going thither in palanquins, the slaves holding a canopy over their heads.



Nail Cleaners, Tweezers
and Earpick on a Swivel

Let us turn to the military life of the town and imagine a cohort entering Augusta. It is a splendid sight. The metal casques of the soldiers gleam, their shields sparkle in the sunshine ; in their hands they hold long javelins, at their sides are their short swords. The centurion rides at the head of the cohort, a splendid figure on his noble horse. His red toga is fastened

by an enamelled brooch and only partially hides his decorated armour. The leather thongs of his sandals are bound criss-cross around his legs, and on his head is a casque with nodding plumes. The shield on his arm is splendidly wrought with curves and scrolls inlaid with enamel, no longer red enamel only, but also with blue and white ; the bridle of his horse and its accoutrements are thus ornamented. His officers are only second in splendour to himself. Then come the infantry, marching along, the cavalry ride in the rear, their magnificent horses pawing the ground. No wonder the children are excited and shout with glee as the soldiers pass.



MONA, the sacred island, with dark woods covering the heights, with glades of oak trees crowned with the mysterious mistletoe, was the headquarters of Druidism. It was the academy where the holy men received disciples who came to learn their system. They taught the mystic nature of numbers, they discoursed upon the spheres and their motions, upon the force and powers of the soul. They believed that the soul is a thing immortal, that at death it passes into another body. Theirs was a secret doctrine : it was not committed to writing, disciples used to learn it by heart. None dared to approach the sacred dell where the Druids held their classes in the depths of the woods. There they performed their rites—horrible rites, in which the blood of human beings and of animals was shed. Fugitives from Britain sought refuge in their woods. The Druids welcomed all who came ; by sacrifices, by exhortations they tried to uphold the national spirit. The Romans rightly felt that before they could completely subjugate the people they must destroy this priesthood that embodied

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the national spirit of the Britons and encouraged rebellion.

In order to cross the Menai straits, on the other side of which was the holy island, Suetonius ordered flat-bottomed boats to be constructed. The soldiers crowded the boats, and as they slowly approached Mona an awesome spectacle met their gaze.

On the heights were gathered the white-robed Druids, calling aloud to heaven with outstretched hands. In loud and threatening tones they warned the invaders of the vengeance of the gods. There, too, were the bards in blue, recounting the glorious actions of the Britons, calling upon them to stand or die; beside them the Ovates, clad in green, invoked the gods of nature. Wild-eyed women dressed in black, with hair loose, brandishing torches, ran in and out amongst the assembled ranks. In front of all were the fugitives armed with missiles. The legionaries were taken aback: they were paralysed, they could not move. The dread of the supernatural was upon them, and they heeded not the stones thrown in their midst. The gloomy forest in whose glades the sacrifices were offered was a fitting background for such a scene. What shades would come out to fight for the Druids?

"Are you afraid? Ye who have conquered the world, would you shrink from women and old men?" cried Suetonius.

Still the legionaries hesitated, but as no thunder came down from heaven, no fire arose from hell, presently they took heart. Suddenly they rushed forward, and then began a scene of merciless slaughter. The women were murdered, and the Druids were put to the sword in spite of the sacredness of their office. The bards

THE LAST OF THE DRUIDS

were silenced for ever, the fugitives were massacred. No avenging power interfered ; all were slain on that black day. Some fled to the forest, to the groves of oak, for refuge. " Fire the woods," commanded Suetonius. " Think of all that went on there, of all that suffered therein." Snatching a torch from a dead woman's hand he fired a tree that stood on the edge of a glade. The soldiers followed his example, and amid wild cries the woods were soon blazing, the fresh green woods where so many victims had laid down their lives. Far out at sea the people saw the forests burning and heard the cries of the dying, the screams of the terrified animals. Higher leapt the flames ; they swiftly spread till the island looked like a wall of fire.

Through the day the woods burned and smouldered, and then all was over. Some charred bodies were found, but all life was extinct ; Druidism was no more. Its mighty aspirations and its unforgivable cruelty were alike extinguished. The ancient religion survived in Ireland but in Britain the Romans had conquered.

Suetonius, being called away, did not stay to complete his conquest. He did not leave a single Roman soldier behind him, and so it happened that after the burning of its sacred groves, Mona continued to be a place of refuge to the persecuted Britons.

*"The true worth of a man is to be
measured by the objects he pursues."*

MARCUS AURELIUS.



AFTER Suetonius Paulinus the governors of Britain were too indolent to rule the turbulent province, until Agricola came. He was the first who conquered by subjugating the mind of her people and subduing their spirit. Like all great men he owed much to his mother, Julia Procilla. His father had been put to death by order of Gaius Caesar for having refused to impeach a man whom he considered innocent, so the boy was left entirely to his mother's care. They lived in the beautiful city of Massilia (Marseilles), amidst refined surroundings, but with careful frugality. They were always together and she did everything to train and form his spirit. He was fond of study and would have loved to devote his life to philosophy, but his mother, to whom he confided his dreams, checked his zeal.

"A Roman," she said, "must not spend his days in dreams, however noble those day-dreams may be. He has practical work to do in the world. Remember that always, my son."

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His aspiring soul rebelled at first. What cared he for ambition? "But my mother taught me that the first essential of a good life was moderation," he used to say in after years. She was very proud of him, of his quickness in learning, of his appearance, for he was graceful in figure, alert and agile, and his countenance was engaging and gracious.

Arrived at the age when a young man must bear arms, he served his apprenticeship in Britain under Suetonius Paulinus. "Go, my son," his mother said, "never shirk your duty, never use your privileges of rank or birth to procure yourself enjoyment!"

He went with his mother's words ringing in his ears. His soul was filled with the desire of warlike renown, and he served Suetonius Paulinus well. He got skill and experience if he did not get fame. After he had taken his part in some of the battles I have told you of, had assisted at the overthrow of Boadicea, and had witnessed the massacre of the Druids, he returned to Rome, there to go through a course of study to fit him for holding office. We can imagine him with his mother then, she so proud of her son, he so dutiful to her. Under her influence he learnt how to conduct himself with others and how to control a vast estate. She wished him to marry, and his choice fell upon Domitia Decidiana, a lady of illustrious birth. A year after his marriage the greatest misfortune occurred to Agricola: his mother, who was living on her estate at Ventimilia, was murdered by pirates, who had been lured by reports of her wealth. Agricola was paralysed with grief. He imagined he saw his mother everywhere, that he heard her voice, and that she bade him be stoical.

Then the news came that Vespasian was aiming at

AGRICOLA

the throne, and the spirit of the soldier stirred within Agricola. His grief was buried in activity. He worked for Vespasian with so much zeal that he was entrusted with the command of the 20th legion, the soldiers of which had refused to take the oath of allegiance. By his firmness and his kindness he soon reduced the men to obedience.

“Strike when it is necessary, then clear your mind of all thought of anger.” This was the answer he gave when reproached with being too severe to those who were wrong, too kind to those who were right. He tried to keep distinct his official demeanour and his true nature. In public he was dignified, thoughtful and austere. When business was done he was altogether without harshness, pride or greed. He was governor for three years of Aquitaine in France, then he was recalled to Rome, made consul, and appointed Governor of Britain. Before going he gave his daughter in marriage to Tacitus, the historian.

Agricola went forth accompanied by a fleet. It was a long and perilous journey. Was Britain an island? The Romans were nearly certain it was. They discovered the Orcades (Orkneys). They descried in the distance an island hidden by the snows which they imagined was Thule, as they called what they thought to be the northernmost island in the northern ocean. Then at last the governor came to his Province.

It was midsummer when he landed in North Wales. Shortly before his arrival the Ordovices had destroyed a force of auxiliaries stationed in their country. Agricola heard the news and his ire was roused. “The Roman rule is not to be thought of lightly. We must avenge this insult,” he said, and he

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marched straight to the mountains of the tribe. The Roman detachments were scattered all over the Province. Agricola would not listen to the advice proffered liberally to wait until he got more men at his command. "The time to strike the blow is now. We cannot wait," he replied. When he got to the land of the Ordovices not a man was to be seen in the plains. They had gone into the mountains. They thought they were safe there, that he would never follow them.

"Soldiers," he said, pointing to the hills, "follow



British Earth-work. Probably used by Romans because of its commanding Position

me. You will not allow your comrades to be murdered without avenging their death."

Shouts greeted this speech. The legionaries were ready to follow their general wherever he might lead them. At last they came to where the tribesmen stood at bay. Putting himself at the head of his men he went up the hill. His lithe and vigorous figure was everywhere to be seen encouraging the Romans. The Ordovices were so scared at the sight of the cohorts, and of their resolute leader, that they fought badly, and

AGRICOLA

were easily beaten. The revenge Agricola took was terrible. The tribe was almost extirpated, say the historians.

“It is necessary,” said Agricola. “The Romans must be respected.”

Agricola turned his attention next to Mona, which after the departure of the Romans under Suetonius had been gradually refilling with refugees from the mainland.

The approach of the legionaries was seen from the island. The people there had thought themselves safe, and now, panic-stricken, they made haste to submit. Thus Agricola began his rule as Governor of Britain. He had struck terror into the hearts of the rebellious, he had made the name of Rome to be respected; yet he refused to take the glory to himself. “It was my soldiers who did it,” said he, “give them the credit!”



*" He that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong.
Deep as hell I count his error,
Let him hear my song."*

TENNYSON.

HOW AGRICOLA CONQUERED



“**L**ITTLE is gained by conquest if followed by oppression” was one of Agricola’s maxims. He determined to root out all causes of war; and he began by strict discipline of himself and of his household. “We shall give them the example of frugality,” he said; and he led a strenuous and just life. He never transacted business through freedmen or slaves; he allowed no private leanings, no entreaties of friends to cloud his judgment; he always chose the best man for the place and one whom he deemed trustworthy; he lightened exactions; he would not allow bribery. “No one who takes a bribe can be my servant,” he said. “The name of Roman must be respected as much for integrity as for force of arms.”

When the spring came he assembled his forces and set out upon another campaign. He marched with his soldiers and shared their privations, he was one of them. He chose the position of his camp, he explored the estuaries and the forests; he continued his road-making. Meanwhile he gave no rest to the enemy, until having sufficiently alarmed him he allured him by proposals of

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

peace, displaying all its advantages. Many tribes sent in their submission, and Agricola, while accepting it, built forts among them, which he garrisoned. He laboured at peace. "Other generals," he said, "have sought to establish the sway of Rome by oppression.

I will establish it by showing the Britons how sweet and beautiful life may be."



Altar to Jupiter found at the Wall.

The inscription has been rendered :
 "To Jupiter, the best and greatest,
 The Second Cohort of the Tungrians,
 A military regiment having a proportionate supply of horse and consisting of citizens of Latium,
 Commanded by Albus Severus, prefect of the Tungrians, erected this :
 The work being superintended by Victor Severus, the princeps."

His conquest of Britain was a conquest of the mind. He gave from his private purse what sum was lacking for the building of temples, for amphitheatres, for courts of justice, for schools ; he provided a liberal education for the sons of chiefs. "I like the Britons," he would say, "I like their natural wit, I prefer them to the Gauls." The young barbarians were flattered, they took to the Latin tongue, which they had hitherto despised ; they affected the toga as the fashionable garment. Little by little

Agricola won them over to the pleasures of the lounge, the bath and the banquet. He had an object and a method in all he did : he, the Roman general, thought there was nothing like Rome, and if by mental appeal he could subjugate the Britons and lead them to loftier ideals he was doing a good service. Thus Agricola was the first to conquer Britain ; by substituting for their heroic ideals a love of culture and luxury he led her children into spiritual servitude. Oh, terrible



With rough eloquence the Irish king set forth his wrongs

HOW AGRICOLA CONQUERED

loss ! But they did not know it, these children of an untamed nation, they did not see where they were being led by this subtle Roman.

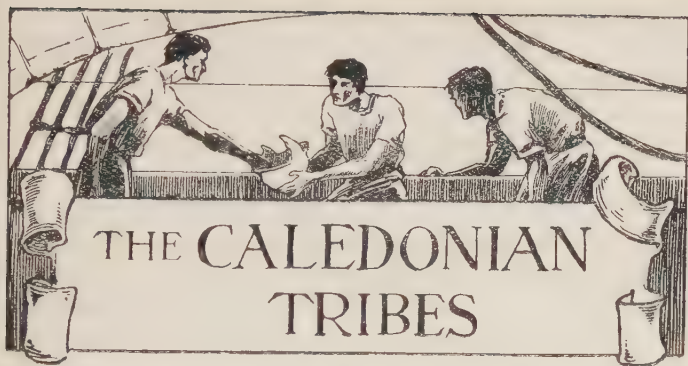
In the third year after his landing the Governor went North. The coming of Agricola at the head of an army filled with dread the tribes through whose territory he passed ; they offered peace, and he accepted it. He built forts all the way, as was his custom. It was noticed that not a single fort established by him was ever destroyed, not one was ever stormed by the enemy or abandoned by capitulation or flight. " They shall be impregnable," he said. " I will supply them with ammunition and victuals to last the winter." His policy was successful, the despairing enemy found himself repelled in winter as he had been in summer. Hitherto beaten in the fine weather he had always retrieved his losses in the winter time.

Agricola continued his march northward. Once he stopped where, in the distance, veiled in mists, he could see Ireland. One of its kings, a fugitive, came asking to see Agricola. We must imagine the rude barbarian and the polished Roman general. With rough eloquence the Irish king set forth his wrongs : he had been driven out of his land ; he had been robbed of his rights ; a usurper had taken his throne. Would the great Roman general help him ? Would he restore him to the throne of his fathers ? Agricola listened with knitted brows. A vision rose before him of Ireland conquered for Rome ; a legion and a few auxiliaries would be sufficient to subdue and to hold it, he thought. It would remove from Britain the sight of freedom, that dangerous spectacle would be banished for ever from her sight. She would see the legions everywhere victoriously

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

holding the country. Agricola's imagination was fired, that glorious thought haunted him. "The land must be conquered for Rome," he said, and he kept the barbarian king on a visit.





IN the sixth year of Agricola's rule he again pushed North, wishing to extend the conquest of Britain beyond the Firth of Forth. He was escorted by a fleet, and the warships explored all the harbours as they progressed. What glorious times they had, infantry, cavalry, sailors, when they met by the camp-fire and told each other their adventures!

The mariners boasted that the dangers of the sea were far more terrible than those of the land. The landsmen would not admit this; they spoke of all the perils they had overcome in the forests, the marshes, the mountain recesses; of the wild beasts that had attacked them, of the barbarians they had fought. They related the adventures of the Usipean cohort that had been raised in Germany and had embarked on three swift galleys. These men had sailed round Britain without anyone being aware of it. Their provisions had failed and they had fought amongst themselves for their scanty rations. At last, famine-stricken, they had drawn lots and devoured some of

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

their number. They told how their ships were intercepted, how they had been mistaken for pirates, taken prisoner and sold as slaves. Thus they narrated all sorts of wild adventures, much as the Greeks used to do by the camp-fires before Troy.

Once the 9th legion was surprised during the stillness of the night. There was a sudden shout and a rush and the Caledonians dashed in upon the unsuspecting Romans. They came in overpowering numbers, and Agricola was away at some distance. However, scouts warned him of the peril and he at once set out.

"Comrades," he said, addressing the most active of his cavalry, "our soldiers are in danger. Attack the enemy in the rear. Give a great shout when you approach." The day was breaking over the hills as he reached the spot, his standards caught the light, and the shout of his cavalry sounded far and wide. It revived the courage of the broken legion, but it renewed also the ardour of the Caledonians, who saw their danger. There was a fierce onslaught within the narrow precincts of the camp. Both armies were roused to fury: one actuated by despair, the other by hope; but in the end the Britons were overwhelmed and the survivors driven to their morasses and forests.

The Roman soldiers clamoured to be taken still farther north into Caledonia. They had their brothers' deaths to avenge, they urged.

It was not until the summer of the next year that their wish was granted. Agricola had lost his son, and in the activity of war he now sought distraction from sorrow. He sent his fleet before him, causing

THE CALEDONIAN TRIBES

widespread alarm, and followed with his army until he reached the Grampian mountains, the belt of hills dividing Britain and Caledonia. The Picts and Scots knew that this was the moment when their fate was to be decided; for once they laid aside their divisions, and united thirty thousand strong to meet the common foe.

From the high mountains they came: the Picts half naked and barefooted, tattooed with strange shapes of beasts and birds, wearing iron bands and collars; they could swim like fishes; they lay in wait for their enemies half buried in the mud for hours; the Scots, tall, red-haired men, with fierce blue eyes, in chariots drawn by mountain ponies; they were armed with targets and daggers; each man carried a short pike with a bronze bell attached, which he struck in order to affright the enemy.

These strange men, whose women and children were unkempt as they, roamed the mountains with neither settled houses nor fields, and lived on the scantiest of food. They had discovered an earth-nut, the root of which they pounded and made into a kind of bread, a small portion of which satisfied them, so that their necessities were easily provided for. They would not touch fish, however hungry they might be, as they had a superstitious dread of it as food, but some nourishment they also got from fruit and nuts and from the bark of trees, and of course they hunted the wild creatures of the forests.

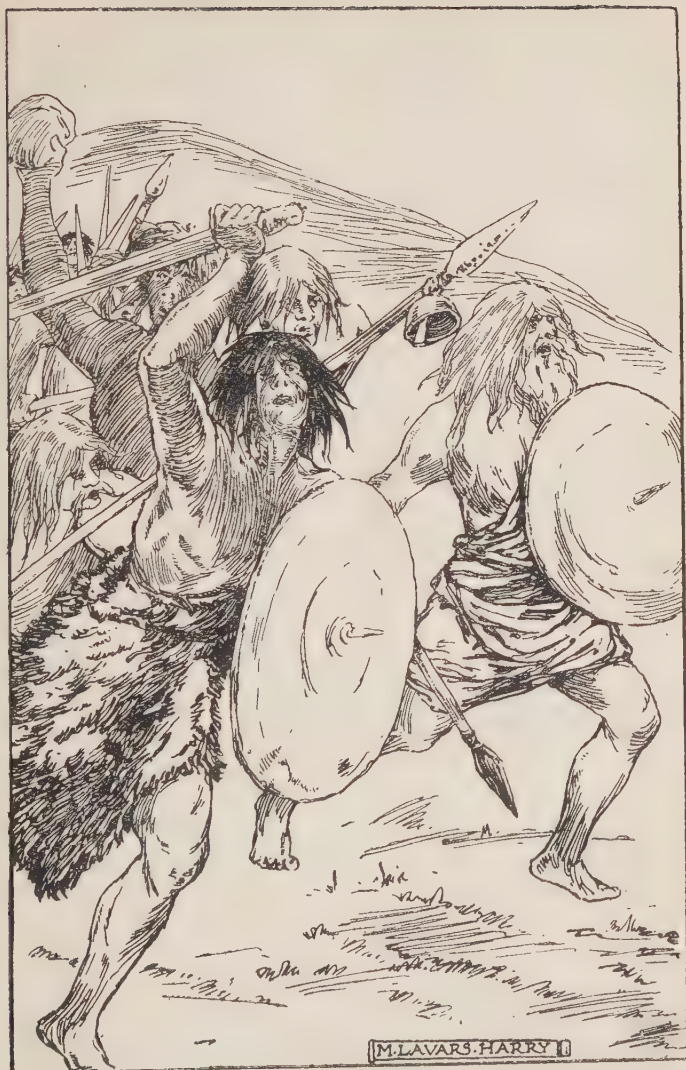
They came, a strange crew, clamouring for battle, filling the air with their shouts, with the ringing of their bronze bells, and with their wild battle songs. Galgacus, superior to all in valour, was their chief,

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

and he addressed them as they gathered about him. Their union gave him hope. He saw in it the promise of freedom to Caledonia and to the whole of Britain. He described the Romans as robbers of the world, "who gave the lying name of Empire to slaughter and plunder. But slavery is unknown to us," he went on proudly, looking at the half-naked multitude. "Britain is daily feeding those who have enslaved her people. We will die rather than do this." He spoke of Boadicea, who had burnt a colony and stormed a camp. "On the one side you have a general and an army, on the other side tribute, and all the penalties of an enslaved people." The Picts and Scots heard him and the sound of their shouts and ringing of bells reached to the welkin.

Agricola's troops were eager to engage. He addressed them, speaking of their past prowess, exhorting them to put an end to the campaign by a complete victory, "to crown your fifty years' service with a glorious day, to prove to your country that her armies can never be fairly charged with protracting a war or with causing a rebellion."

When he had made an end of his speech the two armies flew at each other. The Picts and Scots were infinitely more numerous, they occupied high ground, and rose like an arch up the slope of the hills. The savage cries, the ringing of bells, the rapid movements of the chariots, caused a din and uproar very fearful to hear. It was as if all the powers of evil were let loose. To encourage his men Agricola sent away his horse and took his stand on foot before the eagles of the cohorts. He urged them to get to close quarters. The Caledonians bore unwieldy pointless swords and



They came, a strange crew, clamouring for battle

THE CALEDONIAN TRIBES

small shields, and so were at a great disadvantage when the Romans closed with them. The legionaries dashed their shields into the faces of their foes and stabbed them with their short swords. On the other hand, the chariots struck dismay in the ranks of the Romans, and the panic spread. From the hilltops came the Caledonians who had not yet taken part in the battle, and this new force threatened the rear of the Romans.

Agricola had foreseen this movement, and he now summoned four cohorts of cavalry which he had reserved for such an emergency. These men determined the issue of the battle and the field now presented an awful spectacle. Many of the chariots had lost their charioteers, and the terrified horses dashed about in wild confusion. The antagonists were mingled together in equal disorder, hacking and slaying, and mangled corpses were piled up in every direction. Gradually the Romans pressed the Caledonians before them, until their flight became a disastrous rout. They fled singly and in whole companies, but some there were who courted death, rushing upon the Roman weapons. The country was deluged with blood. Despair gave the Caledonians courage, and on reaching a wood they turned upon their pursuers, whereupon Agricola ordered some lightly equipped cohorts and a detachment of cavalry to scour the forest and complete their confusion.

Night came at last and put an end to the frightful carnage. Ten thousand Picts and Scots were slain, while only three hundred and forty Romans, with a superior officer, were killed.

The victors spent the night in carousing, the beaten

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in wailing and lamentation. Day came and revealed a desolate scene : the Caledonians had vanished ; naught was left of them save the piles of their dead and wounded and the smoke and flames from their huts, which they had fired before forsaking their hills.

The work of destruction had been done so effectively that it was not necessary to continue the war. Agricola retraced his steps slowly through the territories of the conquered tribes, while his fleet went round the coast of Britain. Then he received the looked-for summons home from the Emperor Domitian, and having given up the governorship of Britain he entered Rome, without pomp or show, at night, and went direct to the palace. Domitian received him with envy at heart. He embraced the general, but not a word of congratulation did he utter. The people, however, did not treat him thus ; enthusiasm met him everywhere, the Senate lauded him and decreed a laurelled statue to be erected in his honour.

After this one or two governorships were offered to Agricola, but he did not take them. His life's work was done and about three years later he died at the age of fifty-six. He was a great general, mild and brave ; in advance of his time he sought to reap the fruits of his conquests by the application of humanising methods. His antagonists were brave, but their ways were barbarous ; he determined to civilise them, and he never faltered at his task. Tacitus, in writing his life, passed a eulogy upon him :

“ Whatever we love, whatever we admire in Agricola survives, and will survive in the hearts of men, in the succession of the ages, in the fame that waits on noble deeds. Over many indeed of those who

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have gone before, as over the inglorious and ignoble, the waves of oblivion will roll. Agricola made known to posterity by history and tradition will live for ever."



*" Build to-day then strong and sure
On a firm and ample base,
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place."*

LONGFELLOW.



THE great Roman wall, sometimes called the Picts' wall, extended from Wallsend on the north side of the Tyne to Bowness on the Solway Firth. It was eighty miles long, eighteen feet high, and nine feet thick. Nothing in all the Empire could be compared with the wonder of that wall. Beyond the wall, in the wild mountains to the north of Britain, dwelt the Picts. You will remember that they had been driven out of the greater part of Britain by the conquering Celt. It was their habit to tattoo themselves from head to foot.

What was this peculiar habit you may ask? The queer little brown men pricked patterns upon their skin until the blood came, and then they rubbed in various juices which preserved the patterns and made them show up in different colours. They were far more awesome than their neighbours, the red-haired Scots, despite their superior size and fierce blue eyes. Hadrian knew them; the countries he had traversed were filled with tokens of them. They were the dolmen builders, they had built the stone circles that

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

abounded in Gaul, which were to be found all over Britain. They were full of energy, and many of them had the strange gift of second sight—the gift, that is, of being able to see things happen at a great distance, farther off than bodily eyes can see. They loved the heather and it was an emblem of their loyalty to one another. A friend who wore a piece of heather in a conspicuous place could traverse the whole of Pictland without fear. But Hadrian knew that there was no settling down in peace where they were. They would



Coin of Hadrian

not be subjugated, and their inroads were a source of continual trouble to the Romans in the north. And so the Emperor determined to build a barrier across the narrowest part of Britain. The wall would be the boundary of the Roman possessions and the country beyond would be left to the Picts.

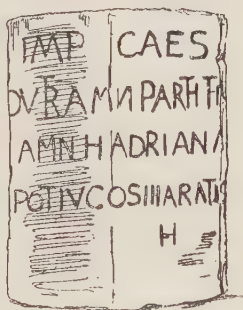
The great work was carried out by natives under Roman supervision, and Aulus Platorius Nepos had supreme charge in Hadrian's absence. The stone used was hauled from quarries some seven or eight miles distant and some of the blocks were inscribed with the names of those who had worked upon them. Each stone was carefully selected, and the mortar used was more

THE WALL

like the concrete of to-day. On the north side of the lofty structure was a ditch measuring about thirty-five feet across the top and about ten feet at the bottom; its depth was fifteen feet. Through alluvial soil, over rocks of sandstone and limestone, now climbing up the mountains, now going down into the deep valleys, went the wall, and the ditch. When we see the ruins of that immense barrier, sometimes clinging to the edge of a cliff high above our heads, sometimes below our feet, we cannot fail to appreciate the marvellous energy of those wonderful Romans.

About four miles apart from each other were stationed twenty military camps, quadrangular in shape, each covering from three to six acres. No two adjoining camps were held by soldiers of the same nationality, who spoke the same tongue or worshipped the same gods. Gauls, Germans, Spaniards, Moors, cavalry from the Loire, Basques from the Pyrenees, Sarmatians from the lowlands of the Danube, in all from ten to fifteen thousand men, were there. All, it is said, officers and men alike, had committed some wrong or folly, for which they were sent to the wall. The dullness of their servitude was somewhat enlivened by cock-fighting, dog-fighting, wolf-baiting, horse-racing and other more or less brutal sports.

A huge statue of Roma Dea brooded over the wall, but the men erected altars to the gods of their various



Roman Milestone

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nationalities. There was an altar to Victoria Victrix, the ruins of which still exist, one to Hercules, another to Epona who guided the horses, and to Neptune, the god of the ocean. Many altars were erected to the greatest of the gods, sometimes as Jupiter, god of the thunder,



Altar to Cocidius

sometimes under other names. Another altar was in honour of Cocidius, a native British god. Mercury appears in various guises, and so does Mars. A semi-subterranean cave was dedicated to the worship of Mythras, a god widely worshipped, whose mysteries are supposed to have involved human sacrifices. There was an altar to

the Deæ Matres—the Mothers whom some considered it unlucky to name.

Mile-castles were built on an average of one Roman mile apart from each other. They were quadrangular in form, and whenever the wall came to a mountainous pass, or to a river, there was a mile-castle placed to guard the defile. Between each mile-castle were four watch towers, like sentry boxes. And thus proudly stood the wall dividing Britain from the heather country, the purple land, and its black and hidden bogs. The bees swarmed over the heather, the sheep fed there in spring, and wild beasts, wolves, bears and red deer haunted its recesses. On the other side, the south side, ran a military road raised in the centre about a foot or eighteen inches above the surface of the ground.



Sculpture to the Deæ Matres

Each stationary camp was the beginning of a city, and gradually streets were made and buildings were

THE WALL

erected. There was the splendid villa of the commander, lesser villas of officers of higher or lower degree, and living quarters for the men. By degrees the ramparts and pathways developed into walls and streets, the square of the tribunal into the market-place ; every gateway was the beginning of a suburb where straggling rows of shops, rose gardens, temples and cemeteries were sheltered from danger by the presence of a permanent garrison.

I wonder if when Hadrian lay dying a vision of the



Remains of a Mile-castle on Hadrian's Wall

works that he had accomplished rose before him, and amongst them, the mighty British wall? However this may be, the thought of his achievements brought him little comfort, if we may trust some lines which he wrote at the last as a farewell to his own soul. Our English poet Prior has translated it into English verse :

“ Poor little, pretty, fluttering thing,
Must we no longer live together,
And dost thou preen thy trembling wing,
To take thy flight thou know'st not whither ?
Thy humorous vein, thy pleasing folly,
Lies all neglected, all forgot ;
And pensive, wavering, melancholy,
Thou dread'st and hop'st thou know'st not what.”

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Camden the historian tells us that strange tales were told about the wall. He says: "The fabulous tales of the common people concerning this Wall, I doe wittingly and willingly overpasse. Yet this one thing which I was informed of by men of good credit, I will not conceal from the reader. There continueth a settled perswasion among a great part of the people thereabout, and the same received by tradition, that the Roman soldiers of the marches did plant everywhere in the old time for their use certaine medicinable herbs, for to cure wounds:



Antoninus Pius. So called from his Devotion to the Memory of Hadrian, whose Adopted Son he was

whence is it that some empirick practitioners of chirurgery in Scotland, flock hither every year in the beginning of summer, to gather such simples and wounde herbs; the vertue whereof they highly commend as found by long experience, and to be of singular efficacy."

Antoninus Pius built a second wall, the ruins of which remain in the Graham's dyke on the isthmus between the Forth and Clyde. It consisted of a wall ten feet thick; we cannot tell how high it was. A paved way was close to it, and watch towers within call of one another, where sentinels kept watch day and night; forts were strongly entrenched near it. The province between the two walls was called Valentia.

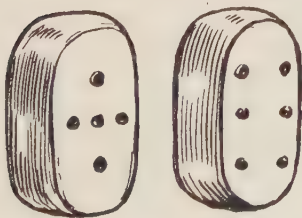
Coins, rings and ornaments have been found there, also statues of the gods. Some remains of altars and the beautiful villas of the officers are to be seen here and there, and parts of the wall itself are still standing. They are full of beauty, with a wealth of flowers and

THE WALL

ferns growing in the interstices, and golden lichens covering the stones as though with gleams of sunshine. These lovely ferns, these innocent wild flowers almost make us forget the horrors, the bloodshed of which the ruins tell. Sir Walter Scott sent some of these wild flowers to a lady :

“ Take these flowers, which purple waving,
On the ruined rampart grew,
Where, the sons of freedom braving,
Rome’s imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger
Pluck no longer laurels there :
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for beauty’s hair.”



Roman Dice

*" Ultima Thule ! Utmost Isle !
Here in thy harbours for awhile
We lower our sails, awhile we rest
From the unending endless quest."*

LONGFELLOW.



EMPEROR AND FATALIST

THE Emperor Severus was holding his court at Rome when news reached him that the Caledonians had broken through the wall, and that his presence was needed in Britain.

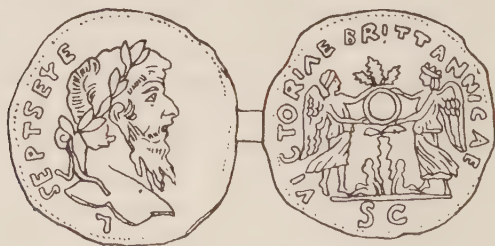
He was an African by birth, a soldier who had climbed to fortune, cruel, determined, and already weary of fortune's brightest gift. "I have tried everything and found everything of no avail," he said. He was passionately addicted to magic, versed in interpretations of dreams and omens, and he never ventured upon an undertaking without first consulting the dread powers. His wife was the beautiful Julia Donna, who had attracted his notice because he had discerned a royal birthmark in her horoscope. They had two sons, Caracalla and Greta, and paternal affection was the only sentiment that softened his haughty and stern nature.

When the call reached him, he broke up his court at Rome (A.D. 208) and transferred it to York (Eboracum), the most important town in Britain during the Roman occupation. He took with him his two sons, for he was glad to withdraw them from the temptations and the luxury of the Imperial City, and he thought

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to overcome the strong dislike the two youths felt for each other.

The wall had to be repaired before he could start warlike operations. The soldiers set to work upon it and mended it thoroughly. Many have thought that it was first built by Severus; but no one can read Mr Bruce's book upon the Roman wall without being convinced that its origin is due to Hadrian. When all was ready Severus advanced and entered the land beyond the wall. His troops felled forests, made roads across



Coin of Severus. At the Base of the Palm-tree, on the Reverse, are two British Captives

the marshes, and built bridges over rivers. The old Emperor directed them but he could not lead in person, he could not go on foot or on horseback, he was ill, tortured with gout, and had to be carried in a litter.

The farther he advanced the deeper the enemy retreated into inaccessible regions where it was impossible to follow. There was no battle, for the Picts and Scots eluded all attempts to bring them to a general engagement. Still the legions continued the tremendous task of making roads. Their flank and rear were continually harassed, they fell into ambuscades, but there was no pitched battle.

EMPEROR AND FATALIST

Let us imagine that immense army making its way through the woods, over the mountains, and across the streams, the aged, suffering man directing his troops, leading them through the thick vegetation, and over the damp soil, where they died in great numbers. The spirits of the departed protected the land, said the natives.

“ Now I behold the chiefs, in the pride of their former deeds,” sings Ossian. “ Their souls are kindled at the battles of old ; at the action of other times. Their eyes are flames of fire. They roll in search of the foes of the land. Their mighty hands are on their swords. Lightning pours from their sides of steel. They come like streams from the mountains ; each rushes roaring from his hill. Bright are the chiefs of battle in the armour of their fathers. Gloomy and dark their heroes follow, like the gathering of the rainy clouds behind the red meteors of heaven. The sounds of crashing arms ascend.”

Severus penetrated farther north than any Roman had done. Men said that he went to the very north of Britain, where he took observations of the length of days and nights and performed magical rites.

The Caledonians at last yielded to his powerful and obstinate attack and sued for peace ; it was granted, but under certain conditions.

Then Severus returned to York, sick in body and mind. A deathblow had been dealt to him by one whom he loved more than anything on earth. Caracalla his son had endeavoured to kill him, and his guards had protected him against his own child. The Emperor would not punish the offender ; he threatened, but he had not the heart to put his threats into execution, and

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he forgave the wretched prince. Sorrow was eating up the Emperor's life ; what mattered to him grandeur and fame when his own son was against him ? He reconstructed the wall between the Clyde and the Forth, but two years had scarcely elapsed when the Picts and Scots were back again, harrying the land between it and the great wall of Hadrian. Then Severus swore a mighty oath that he would destroy the barbarians, root and branch.

Disease gripped him and his sufferings increased day by day. He saw omens in everything, speaking to him of his approaching death. In a dream he saw himself ascending to heaven in a brilliant chariot drawn by four eagles, preceded by a gigantic figure. Suddenly, it seemed, he was standing alone on an immense circular sheet of brass. He feared he was abandoned and that he might lose his footing and be plunged into infinite space. When his vision had reached a crisis, and he could bear no more, Jupiter himself appeared and placed him between the Antonines.

One day, weak and exhausted, the Emperor bade a soothsayer lead him to the house of a god to whom he might make supplication for relief from his pain. The man guided him to the temple of Bellona, the goddess of war, and we can imagine the procession, with the sick Emperor in his litter and his attendants bearing the gifts which their master was to offer.

Human victims were offered upon the altar of this bloodthirsty goddess, and at the moment of the Emperor's arrival some dark-complexioned slaves were about to be immolated. The entrance of Severus created a diversion, and while the stricken Emperor offered his gifts before the altar the destined victims



Men said that Severus performed magic rites

EMPEROR AND FATALIST

mingled with the crowd and, unseen by the priests, they managed to slip out of the temple in the train of the Emperor as the procession left the building.

As Severus approached the Wall of Hadrian, "looking like one dead," said the curious bystanders, suddenly a negro approached, bearing in his hand a garland of cypress leaves. He was as one inspired, perhaps he was mad. "You have conquered all things in the flesh," he chanted, "be the god of victory." The awe-struck crowd made no attempt to interfere as the negro drew close to the Emperor and laid the funeral wreath at his feet.

Without further adventure the pale Emperor was carried on to his palace, and, looking like one already dead, he was lifted out of his litter and placed to rest on his couch. In the crowd which thronged the courtyard were the swarthy slaves who had followed him home, and we can imagine that the sight of their dark faces would have seemed to his superstitious nature like a further omen of death. He had gone forth with gifts to implore that he might be healed, and the goddess had answered with portents of death. A convulsive twitching passed over his weakened frame, he hid his face in the richly embroidered pillow. A few days later Death came to release him, and his last words, it is said, were: "The Empire was all troubled and confused when its throne was offered to me, I leave it peaceful to Britain, its extremest limit. I bequeath my inheritance to my sons. The Empire will be strong and assured if they are united and righteous, and it will grow feeble and fragile if discord reigns between them."

Severus died 211 A.D., and his body was burned out-

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side the present city of York. The ashes were enclosed in an urn of porphyry and conveyed to Rome to be placed in the tomb of the Antonines which he had himself built. To mark where the funeral pyre was erected the soldiers of the Tenth Legion cast spadefuls of earth upon the spot, and so created a hill of considerable height known to this day as the Severus Hill.





THE glory of Rome had begun to depart ; there was cruelty and vice in the beautiful villas that now dotted the country. How different was Britain from what it was when we first saw it. Now it was traversed by a network of roads splendidly made, running straight over the swamps and through the woods. A blazing fire from a lofty lighthouse at Dover guided the visitor to Britain, and on every hand he might see handsomely appointed Roman villas and British huts and farms.

The Franks and the Saxons so infested the coasts of Britain that the Romans were compelled to station a powerful fleet at Boulogne. They had long watched the career of Carausius, a famous leader of the Menapeans, a Teutonic tribe settled near the Scheldt. This man was of the meanest origin ; but he was handsome, gay, open-handed and marvellously brave, so that there is small wonder that he attracted other men. He had taken to piracy, and on the principle of " set a thief to catch a thief " the Romans felt he was the man to fight the sea-raiders. They made him a captain, and he rose quickly

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till he became commander-in-chief of the fleet which guarded the coasts of Britain and Gaul.

The Franks and the Saxons were Germanic tribes, bloody and pitiless; they pillaged, they murdered wherever they went and Britain was their favourite hunting-ground. Carausius placed his scouts on the shore; his brilliant personality, his wonderful seamanship, his quick decision, his liberality and cheer made him the idol of his men. They were his slaves, enthusiastic and devoted, and so well did they fight that the pirates were invariably beaten. The raiders often eluded the watchfulness of their foes and effected a landing, but they could not always escape with the loot with which they were laden.

After a while strange rumours began to reach Rome. It was said that Carausius was serving his own purposes; he conquered the pirates, he wrung from them their booty, but where was the booty? His enemies said that he allowed the pirates to go on their nefarious business without let or hindrance; he waited for them when they had done their pillaging, then he gave them battle and took from them their spoils, which he kept for himself. He was growing fabulously rich, rumour said.

The Senate decreed his death and a Roman force tried to surprise him at the port of Boulogne, but Carausius expected this and before they could trap him he had crossed over to Britain with his fleet (A.D. 287). His unbounded wealth, which he knew how to spend to his advantage, helped to retain his popularity with his followers. Soon he claimed the title of Emperor of Britain and the legions acclaimed him with cheers. Seeing that he was firmly entrenched in power the

CARAUSIUS

Senate did not dare oppose him, instead they made him Count of the Saxon Shore, and they allowed him to keep the title which he had won for himself. Carausius gloried in his triumph, he, a Menapean of the lowest birth who had climbed to the topmost height. Diocletian, the Emperor of Rome, was the son of a serf, Maximian had been a peasant, yet they had climbed to the Imperial throne. As Count of the Saxon Shore Carausius governed and provided for the defence of the south-eastern coast; another ruler commanded in the north, yet Carausius was above him, for he was Emperor of Britain. The legions had acclaimed him; the Senate had recognised their choice. You may see Carausius's portrait on coins struck at that time, a handsome face, bold, brave and astute, expressive of the man. For seven years he reigned in Britain, making friends with those who had lately been his enemies. The Franks and the Saxons became his allies, and he gave them officers to perfect them in the art of navigation. Under his guidance the Saxons became a naval power. "Learn navigation and you will be victorious," he said. During the seven years of his rule his education of the Saxons continued; for seven years he prepared them to vanquish Britain. Meantime the Picts and Scots became turbulent again and Carausius took them in hand; he soon quelled them, and they were forced to retreat to their forests and peat morasses. By his invariable victories he made his name dreaded and respected by his foes, just as by a judicious exercise of the arts of popularity he gained the support of those who could be useful to him; thus he flattered the Franks by adopting something of their fashion of dress.

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Perhaps he was no longer so gay of spirit as he used to be in the days when he was fighting his way up by means not altogether creditable. His brow was often clouded, he knew that somewhere, somehow, fate would overtake him. He had many enemies, yet none came near without feeling the fascination of his personality. The Emperor Constantine was opposed to him and decided to crush him, so when Carausius was in Boulogne he found himself suddenly attacked ; the entrance of the port was blocked with trees, but again Carausius escaped unhurt to Britain.

To celebrate this victory he gave a splendid entertainment (293) ; the grandeur of it was unparalleled. Carausius was more brilliant than ever ; the splendour of his dress was remarked by all those who were present ; gold laurel leaves decked his head, his imperial mantle was of velvet wrought with gold ; his bracelets and necklaces were of gold ; rings and bracelets adorned his fingers and arms. Gold and silver plate shone and glass sparkled upon the board. A boar was placed whole at the head of the table and there was lavish provision of oysters from Sandwich, snails from Gaul, peacocks and game of all kinds. Wine, especially the Falernian, flowed freely, home brewed ale was abundant, and fruit was exquisitely arranged in bowls of Samian ware. Who would have thought that danger lurked in that splendid scene ? Yet it was so. Carausius's lieutenant, Allectus, was among the guests. He had plotted against the life of his master, and when the feast was at its height, when talk and laughter resounded on every side, he gave a pre-arranged signal. In a moment his men had surrounded the Emperor. Carausius was startled : he gazed at the dark faces around him, the gaiety died on his lips, for

CARAUSIUS

he knew that fate had found him out. He was brave, to the last defending himself against the weapons aimed at him on every side. His soldiers and guests rushed to the rescue, but too late.

For all his genius, for all his gay temper, for all the greatness of his past and all its miserable baseness, his life was over. The tragedy was played out. He was the first of the tyrants that usurped the title. Many others were to follow. Allectus was chosen Emperor of Britain, but his reign was brief. Three years later (296) he was slain in battle with the victorious forces of the Emperor Constantius, who re-established the Roman power in Britain.

Towards the middle of the fourth century the British provinces were attacked by sea and land by the Picts and Scots and the warlike Norsemen. The Saxons came like stormy petrels, choosing the worst weather and the most dangerous shores. When dispersed they gathered together at some point left undefended and began to plunder again. They thought to secure for themselves immortality by immolating every tenth captive in honour of the gods of the sea.

In 368, startled by the news that the Picts and Scots had broken through the wall and were devastating the northern provinces, the Romans sent Theodosius, their best general, with two picked legions and a great force of German auxiliaries. He drove the Picts and Scots before him, and succeeded in recovering all the frontier districts, and in restoring the whole machinery of government. A few years afterwards the legions revolted, and insisted upon choosing their own emperor. Their choice fell upon Maximus; he was a harsh man,

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but far-seeing, and waged war successfully against the Picts and Scots.

Meanwhile the Roman Empire was shaken by the invasion of the Huns, led by Alaric, who became the terror of Europe. Other barbarians followed: the Suevi from the German forests, the northern Gaul, the Vandal; they poured in vast hordes upon the civilisation of southern Europe. Rome received the first onslaught, and was forced to withdraw the legions from Britain to protect the heart of her Empire. The Britons were left as sheep to the slaughter and the northmen were quick to renew their attacks. At the entreaties of the defenceless islanders a Roman legion was sent, which was successful in resisting the Viking raiders, but the increasing pressure upon Rome forced the Emperor to withdraw the last Roman soldier in 410 A.D. He sent letters to the cities bidding them provide for their own defence and withdrawing the order of Justinian which forbade natives of conquered provinces to bear arms in their own countries.



THE Britons were in a miserable plight ; their ancient spirit had been broken and they had grown to be dependent upon the might of their Roman conquerors. They had been forbidden to bear arms at home and the most warlike of their young men had been drafted to serve in the foreign legions in Germany, Gaul, or Spain. Those who stayed at home made excellent tradesmen ; their instinct for barter was sure, their honesty was notable, and they were industrious. Many grew rich, and, growing rich, lost their spirit of independence. Naturally the Roman despised them ; to him they were still barbarians and a subject race, and the knowledge that they were looked down upon could not have helped to give strength to the British character.

One foot had been taken from their necks but other masters more ruthless were already treading British soil. The turbulent Picts and Scots came down on the splendid highways built by the Romans, and on the east the sea-raiders were hurrying for the spoil so ready to their hands. Then it was that the inhabitants of Augusta

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waked to the fact that their town, with its accumulated treasure, its art, its trade prosperity—the town in which their wives and children had been safely sheltered for so long a time—was defenceless. Augusta was exposed; its ports spread a mile down the river, and half-a-mile inland. What could they do to defend it? A great council assembled to discuss the common danger. They had never been taught the science of arms, nay, those detected with arms in their possession had been punished. What could they do? Now



Tomb of Valerius Amandinus, a Roman General. Discovered in Westminster Abbey

they realised the weakening effects of the selfish policy of Rome; but they had strong hands and resolute hearts. They would build a wall round the city; there was no time, not an hour, not a minute, to be lost. From Kent they could get the rag stones, from Sussex they could get the cement; but they had no time to go so far. They must set to work at once and use what material they had at hand: stones from the great citadel, from the temples, from the monuments in the churchyards. Who was the architect of the great London wall, none can tell. But there were men amongst them who were well fitted for the task, some of whom had already superintended vast enterprises.

HOW LONDON WALL WAS BUILT

All set to work upon this strong defence. Men and women and children tore down the stones from the citadel, and carried them to the men at work. There have been found in the ruins of London wall, sculptures, statues, pillars, massive boulders, carved stones. Sir Walter Besant ascribes the absence of Roman remains—there are none of the great citadel, of the forum, of the temples—to the fact that they went into the making of the wall. Night and day people worked at it. Sometimes there would come a rumour that the enemy was at hand, then they would work with renewed energy. It is believed that a few weeks sufficed for the achievement of that colossal enterprise. In a short time the wall, ten feet thick and faced with brick, stood some twenty feet high. The Picts and Scots came; the pirates sailed up the river, but none dared approach. They saw the walled city from a distance, its entrenchments solid and vast, its frowning battlements, and they dared not come nigh.



*"The past is all around us—those old spires
That glimmer o'er our head,
Not from the present is their fires,
Their light is from the dead."*

L. E. L.



Cologne Ware

Samian Ware

Funeral Column

WE have spent some time, not unprofitably, I think, in the British Museum. If we would see some further relics of that wonderful past of which I have tried to tell you, let us go now to the Guildhall in London city.

Carefully preserved in a museum there, we may see a large number of mementoes of the Roman occupation, objects brought to light in modern times, chiefly by excavations in London. If we view these interesting relics with a little imagination, if we think how they were part of the daily life of that great people, how they were handled by the dead fingers, how eyes long closed in death gazed upon them daily, we shall appreciate the truth in the poetical fancy that there may be sermons in stones. Here are shoes and sandals, many found when the site of the Royal Exchange was being excavated, looking for all the world as if they had trudged miles through the London mud. Look at this one, with its worn toe. The ten oval holes for the lace with which it was tied are quite distinct. It is described as a buskin for covering the foot and ankle. Here again is

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a child's shoe. It is studded with a row of nails on the outside ridge ; the foot was caught by straps



Roman Shoes and Sandals

both at the toe and at the heel ; the room seems full of the clatter of that little shoe ! It was found near Walbrook.



Roman Armlet and Brooch

Here is a slender sole, with scalloped toe for the right foot ; perhaps it belonged to a Roman lady. It consists of three stout layers studded with nails, the upper layer ornamented with a stamped design.

There are many other shoes and sandals, footgear for little children, strong men, and for women, all recalling the days when they were in use, and the feet once inside them which will stir the dust of this earth no more.

Let us turn now to the personal ornaments and toilet implements. These fibulæ or brooches, there are a

AT THE GUILDHALL

goodly number of them, helped to fasten the mantles on the left shoulder. Some are shaped like a bird, others are lozenge shaped ; some are flat



Bronze Hairpin with Head of Dog. Bone Hairpin with Portrait Head of the Empress Sabina

disks, others are ring brooches of all sorts and designs, some are of horse-shoe pattern, some have curved ends, some are plain circles. Then there are the hairpins ; they have each a single prong, not like those we use now with double prongs. Some of them are ornamented by beads of glass ; some have the heads of animals, or figures of dragons, bears or birds ; some are in jet, some in silver, most are in bronze. There are also bone hairpins. One is ornamented with the portrait head of the Empress Sabina, the wife of Hadrian, crowned with the imperial diadem. How fair my lady must have looked when her hair was dressed and her maidens had put the finishing touches to her attire ! The ornaments, the pendants, the ear-rings, the armlets, the finger rings, the gems, the dress fasteners, all speak of the gala life of long ago.



Roman Brooch

Look at this pretty pendant, shaped like a flower, the centre inlaid with blue enamel. We seem to see again the graceful neck upon which it rested. The beautiful and varied bracelets make us think, too, of the white arms which once they clasped. One of these is

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of silver, the ends decorated with bands of beaded lines and terminating in knobs. The bracelets, however, are usually of bronze.

Then there are finger rings, beautiful rings, many of



Pendant with Centre of Blue Enamel and two
Finger Rings

them set with stones. On one is engraved a figure bearing a cornucopia. The beautiful dress fasteners close by are usually ornamented with beads. There also are the ear-rings that were worn in those distant

days. We need only give a passing glance at the toilet utensils — the bone and horn combs, the earpicks, the tweezers for pulling out superfluous hair, the strigils made of a hammered piece of metal, usually brass, all the implements that went to enhance the loveliness of the fair Roman ladies—for these



Roman Glass Bottles



Unguentaria

objects have been described in a previous chapter.

Let us look rather more closely at the Samian ware with which the Romans adorned their tables. The beautiful vessels are decorated with figures, mostly of gladiators ; there are also animals and birds, bunches

AT THE GUILDHALL

of grapes, sprigs of ivy and other foliage. Most of them bear the makers' names, and they are usually of an exquisite red colour. Then there are other wares, the Cologne ware, the Castor, the Upchurch, all exhibiting the taste that went into the design of all the surroundings of everyday life. We must not pass the glass ware. Look, for instance, at this green glass bottle, square in shape, with a broad handle; look also at the lovely amphoræ, the exquisite long-necked bottles, the beautiful two-handled bowls.

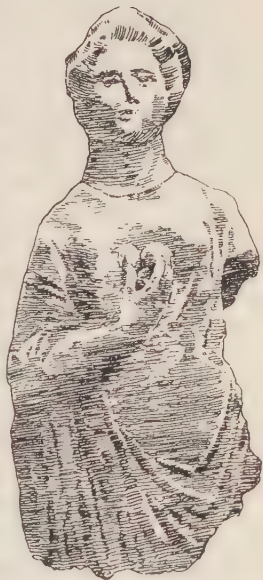


Gold Miniature
Model of an
Infant

I would have you note especially the unguentaria, the bottles for unguents, and the vessels used for perfumes and other toilet requisites, all of lovely coloured glass, amber blue or bluish green—iridescent; they look like solidified soap bubbles. The equally beautiful beads tell the same tale of high civilisation.

We come now to the monumental stones and other sepulchral relics.

One was found on Ludgate Hill: it is a funeral column, and on it is engraved "To the gods of the Shades. Amencletus Provincialis erected this monument to his most devoted wife Claudia Martina in her 19th year." A whole story is told in a few words, a story of love, ended too soon. There is another monumental stone to a little son who died in his thirteenth



Terra-cotta Figure of Demeter
holding Fruit

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

year. There are sculptured stones, of which one is a group of statuary representing the Deæ Matres. It was found in Hart Street, and must have measured three feet in height. There is no doubt that the three seated figures holding baskets of fruit in their laps represent the Deæ Matres. The exhibits present a picture first of the gay round of Vanity Fair and then of its end.



Bronze Bust of Minerva

There are many other things which claim attention: the weapons, the writing tablets and styli or pens, the spinning implements, and above all the terra-cotta and metal figures, which tell the same story of life led long ago. There is a figure of a little infant in gold with outstretched arms. We can imagine the mother tenderly gazing at her little one when this was modelled. Among the splendid figures in terra-cotta is one of Demeter bearing fruit. Then there are the lovely bronze and iron lamps; one designed during the Christian period is ornamented with elaborate art. There are the inscribed lamps, exquisite in shape, some in pale buff ware,



Bronze Hanging Lamp

AT THE GUILDHALL

others of bronze colour. Many of them bear the makers' names, and all are perfect in finish and in form.

Let us look for a moment at the mosaic pavements, of which there are many, red, white, grey and black. In one very fine specimen the lower and main portion is in the form of a parallelogram, and the upper part is semicircular. Between the two sections is a broad band of floral scroll, and the semicircular portion has a fan-shaped design in the centre. This mosaic was found not far from the course of the Walbrook.

It would take quite a volume to do justice to the beauty, the variety of all the articles the Romans left behind. Little by little as we gaze at them the dead past comes to life and we seem to see these men and women in the beautiful surroundings which their taste and wealth had created in a barbarous land. We see them at their work, directing the labours of the subject people; we think of them as striving for fame—alas! few of them are remembered to-day—we see them in the midst of their friends and enjoying the luxuries at their command; we see them bowed with the common human griefs which link them with us who live in the land to-day.

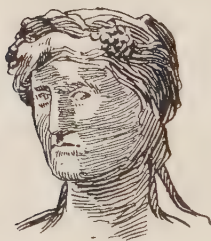
If we would see the faces of some of the Roman rulers of those distant days there are many coins which show them. Few things indicate better than coins the state of civilisation of any country; they are the records of history. They exhibit the condition of the arts, they illustrate commerce



Lamp in red glazed
Ware in form of
a Negro's Head

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as distinct from barter. And here we have a splendid collection, of the coins of Nero and Vespasian, of Domitian, of Trajan, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius. Those of Claudius, above all, are interesting. They vary from quite a barbarous British copy, with Minerva on the reverse, to examples of fine workmanship.



Bronze Head of Bacchus



IT will be profitable to pay another visit to the British Museum, where, also, there is an important collection of Roman remains. Many objects, of course, belong to the same period and to the same order as those in the Guildhall, and we need pay attention only to those which are different. Amongst the coins there are many that belong to an earlier period: heavy copper money which it will be well to look at. So heavy were these coins that the Roman of the fourth century B.C. found it convenient to transport his money in a waggon. In an interesting series of this weighty copper coinage we find the head of Janus, god of beginnings, of Jupiter with laurel crown, of Minerva armed, of Hercules, of Mercury with wings in his cap, of Bellona, the goddess of battle. These appear on



Heavy Copper Coin bearing
Double Head of Janus

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the obverse. On the reverse there is always the prow of a ship. Instead of saying as we do when we throw up a coin, "Heads or tails?" the Romans would say, "Heads or ships?" This copper currency lasted



Silver Coin with Head of Roma on the Obverse and Castor and Pollux on the Reverse

till B.C. 268, when it was found needful to institute a silver currency. The first examples bear the head of the goddess Roma, with winged helmet; on the reverse are Castor and Pollux, the heavenly twins, the patrons of games and of commerce.

Then came the gold coinage. The head of the Roman emperor replaced that of a deity, and the form of inscription was changed. The mintage of gold and silver was the personal right of the emperor, the copper currency was issued by the Senate.

Next let us look at the weapons at which we gave only a passing glance in the Guild-hall. The Romans used a heavy weapon called the pilum, which they threw with great effect at close quarters. The head of this spear was four and a half feet long. They had a lighter spear, called the jaculum, which they cast at long distances, by means of a twisted thong. Their swords were short, and were wielded with



Gold Coin with Head of Nero

deadly effect, as we have seen in all their engagements with the Britons.

Observe the sword called the sword of Tiberius. This was found in a field at Maine on the Rhine. Al-

AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM AGAIN

though very fine in design it is roughly executed, as if it were one of many copies used for an official purpose. It is believed that it was presented as a sort of decoration to all the officers who had served under Germanicus.

The sword measures twenty inches long and two and a half wide. Its hilt is ornamented with a splendid design representing Tiberius receiving Germanicus on the latter's return from his victorious campaign against the Germans in the year 17 A.D. The Emperor is seated holding a statue of victory, the general stands before him with outstretched hand. The scabbard of the sword was made of wood covered with plates of silver gilt, decorated with reliefs in gilt bronze. It was adorned with wreaths of oak and with a portrait of Tiberius. The Roman eagle also appeared on the scabbard.

No Roman shields are represented, for none have survived in their entirety. They were made of wood and leather and only the central boss and the framework were of metal. We may see the Roman legionary equipped for battle on the Trajan column. He is bare legged and bare armed, his feet are covered with thongs, on his head is a small helmet fitting closely with a side cheekpiece. His armour fits over his short tunic, his short sword is at his side; on his shield is his legionary badge, which is also displayed on the standard.

I need not enter again into a description of a Roman house, but we will glance at its beautiful furniture, at



Decorated Sheath
of the Sword of
Tiberius

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

the bronze couches, the stools, the tripods that were also tables, at the lovely lamps and candelabras. Here are the lanterns especially used for out of doors. We can imagine the Roman citizen trudging through the gloom, lantern in hand. It was shaped like a cylinder, with a rounded top, and the light shone through some transparent material such as horn, skin, or linen.



Roman Lantern

We can trace the life of the Roman from childhood upward in the British Museum. First we see the toys. Children of all ages and of all nations have very much the same taste, for these playthings are very similar to those which please the children of to-day. The Roman child liked animals ; there is a donkey, an old woman on a mule, a little boy on a goose. There are the dolls : many of them have holes pierced in the top of their heads for the passage of strings connected with arms and legs. Can we not imagine a wee girl pulling that string ? Often the toys were buried with the children. When the little one's play was over for ever, they were laid with it to rest. In a tomb of early date, in the third century A.D., was found a wooden jointed doll. Sometimes the children, when they got beyond the age for play, dedicated their toys to the shrine of some god. Often a girl before her marriage would sacrifice to Venus her drums, her ball, her hair-net, her dolls and the dress that she wore as a maiden. Pausanias tells us he saw a small couch, said to be a plaything, among the treasures of Hera, but playthings are mostly found buried with the children. In their graves we see them surrounded

AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM AGAIN

by small models of furniture, with tables, chairs, vases : the boys have tops and balls, the girls have dolls.

Amongst the relics of their games knuckle bones figure prominently. Sometimes these were used as dice, which was played by grown-up people just as much as by children. The satirists say it was played with a passion almost amounting to frenzy. We see signs of a game somewhat resembling that of draughts, and another resembling that of chess. These are among the objects at the British Museum which tell of the recreations of the past.

Then there are relics connected with the education of the little Romans. One is a very interesting terra-cotta group of an old schoolmaster seated, with a boy standing by his side. He is reading from a scroll, which was the form books took in those days. It was quite an art to handle the scroll. The reader gradually unfolded it and rolled up the part he had read. The schoolmaster in this group has his arm round the little scholar's shoulders and patiently listens to him stumbling on this difficult script.

Writing, too, was very different from what it is now. The implements used were a wax-coated tablet and a pointed instrument called a stylus. Papyrus was too expensive a material to give to the little ones to spoil with their first attempts. We have interesting remains of these early lessons. One is a wax-coated tablet bearing on one side part of the multiplication table up to three times ten. On the other side is a list of Greek words divided into roots and suffixes. An ancient wall-painting shows us a poetess holding a tablet and stylus.

The Roman betrothal was an interesting ceremony. The fathers or guardians on either side made a solemn

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contract, and the betrothal ring given usually represented clasped hands. The bride wore a saffron-coloured veil and saffron shoes, and her hair, parted in six locks, was wound round her head. The marriage ceremony consisted of the solemn clasping of the bride's and bridegroom's hands, while between them stood a matron with a hand on the shoulder of each. The clasping of hands was followed by a sacrifice to Jupiter, when the husband poured a libation upon the lighted altar. At nightfall a procession was formed, and the bride went to her husband's home preceded by flute players ; at the door of his house the bridegroom carefully lifted her across the threshold, to prevent any ill-omened stumbling. " Carry the gilded feet over the threshold that the omen may be favourable," sings Catullus in a poem descriptive of a Roman wedding. On the day after the marriage the wife offered a sacrifice at her husband's altar.



Gold Coin with Deified Head of Julius Caesar



THE date when Christianity first came to Britain is not certain. Some say it was brought by Paul, the chief apostle of the Gentiles, who journeyed to the extreme west. Others say that Joseph of Arimathea, with heart burning with love for his dead Saviour, brought the message of peace. Others again aver that the gospel was first introduced, over a century after the death of Christ, by priests sent to Britain, at the prayer of a British king named Lucius, who was baptised A.D. 156. However this may be, the religion of peace was joyfully received.

The monk Gildas, writing in the sixth century, says : “ Meanwhile these islands, still with cold and frost, and in a distant region of the world, remote from the visible sun, received the beams of light, that is, the holy precepts of Christ, the true Sun, showing to the whole world his splendour, not only from the temporal firmament, but from the height of heaven, which surpasses everything temporal, at the latter part, as we know, of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, by whom his religion was propagated

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

without impediment, and death threatened to those who interfered with its professors."

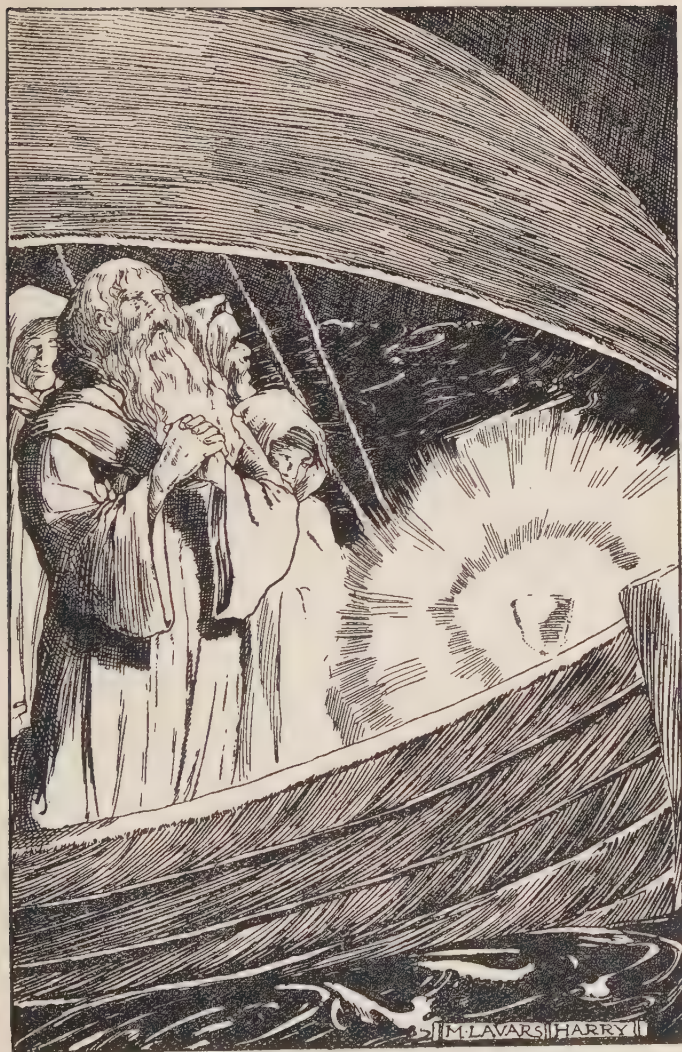
Another tradition attributes the work of converting England to Bran, the father of Caractacus, who was detained at Rome as hostage for his son. Bran was a contemporary of St Paul and eventually returned to carry the good news of the gospel to his countrymen.

The tradition regarding St Joseph of Arimathea is that he came to Britain with Lazarus, Martha and Mary, whom persecutors had exposed in an open boat which carried them to Southern Gaul. St Joseph, with the Holy Grail and his companions, ten in all, landed at Glastonbury, where, constrained by the incredulity of his hearers, he planted his staff in the earth, and commanded it to blossom forth. Obedient to his will, flowers came plentifully, and St Joseph's staff became the famous Glastonbury thorn, which ever after was covered with blossoms on Christmas morning.

"There blooms a beautiful flower ; it blooms in a far-off land ;
Its life has a mystic meaning for few to understand ;
Its leaves illumine the valley, its odour scents the wood ;
And if evil men come near it, they grow for a moment good."

These stories are legendary, and he who first preached the Word of God in Britain is forgotten ; but this much is certain, that early in the third century Tertullian mentions the British Church, and that it suffered persecution under Diocletian.

The first British martyr for the faith was Alban, who suffered at Verulam. The story is a beautiful one, although much of it is legendary. Amphibalus, a Christian priest, had fled to Alban for succour and shelter when he was condemned to death for refusing to sacrifice



St Joseph with the Holy Grail started for Britain

THE MESSAGE OF PEACE

to idols. Alban was greatly moved by the courage of Amphibalus, and he refused to give up the priest. Instead he became a Christian and confessed his faith aloud. This angered the multitude, who clamoured for his death, and he was led forth to the place of execution, a woody height named Holmesworth, on the farther side of the river Ver. The procession came to the bridge but could not cross it for the crowd that had come out to see the spectacle. Then Alban prayed aloud that a way might be made, for he longed to be a martyr for his Saviour. And lo ! the waters dried up, and even as the Israelites passed dry-shod over the Red Sea, so did Alban and they who were with him pass over the river, the waters "standing upon each side like walls." The procession arrived at the hilltop where Alban was to be executed, and he thirsted, when, behold ! a spring of water gushed forth at his feet. The executioner was so struck with awe that rather than execute the sentence upon this holy man he preferred to share death with him.

The date of Alban's martyrdom was the 17th or the 20th June A.D. 304, and the noble abbey that bears his name was erected on the place where he was murdered. In the centre of the Saints' Chapel stands his shrine, and the pavement round it is worn deeply by the feet and knees of successive generations of pilgrims who have knelt there. There is an oak gallery known as the watchers' gallery where the monks kept silent watch day and night over the resting-place of the martyr and the offerings placed upon it by the pilgrims.

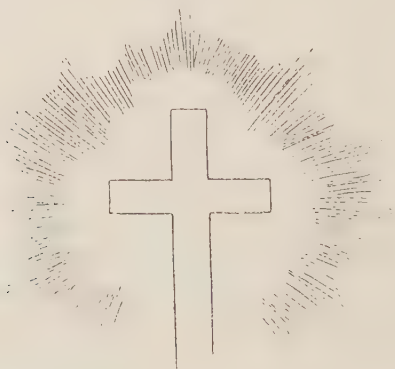
For ten years the Christians endured persecution, and many were driven to hide themselves in the woods

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

and in secret places. Most of their names are forgotten, but amongst the number of those heroes who early suffered for the faith were Aaron and Julian, citizens of Carlisle. They suffered cruelly, their limbs being torn, but they endured to the end with joy.

At last the cruel persecution came to an end ; then, as Gildas says, " all Christ's young disciples, after so long and wintry a night, began to behold the genial light of heaven. They rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground. Everywhere they showed their ensigns as tokens of their victory ; festivals were celebrated and sacraments received with clean hearts and lips, and all the church's sons rejoiced as it were in the fostering bosom of a mother."

Christianity, however, was not recognised as the State religion till 324, when Constantine, himself a Christian, exhorted his subjects to follow his example and abandon the errors of paganism.





THERE is a name which shines very brightly in the early history of the Christian Church in Britain. St Patrick, the apostle of the Irish, was not born in Ireland; he was a native of Bennaventa, on the borders of the river Severn, and his parents were Christian subjects of Rome. One day, when he was seventeen years old, he was working on his father's farm when Irish freebooters came down and took him prisoner, he and his men servants and maid servants. Together with his fellow-captives he was put in chains and carried over the sea to what they thought to be the very farthest edge of the earth. The wild and desolate land of Connaught was their goal; and on arrival there he was sold as a slave and became a shepherd, tending the flocks of Miliucc, a Druid, for there were Druids in Ireland.

Hard by his master's homestead was a forest, dense and pathless, called Fuchlad, that reached to "the shore of the western sea," and close by was a mountain, Crochan-Aigli. Patrick for six years tended Miliucc's flocks on the mountain side or in the deep forest, and

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the God of his father awoke in him "the sense of his unbelief." In his old age he wrote a book entitled "The Confession," that deals especially with the marvellous ways of God towards him. The heart of the young shepherd became aflame with the love of the Lord and of His angels. He was always praying, he tells us; he would rise before the dawn in all weathers—hail, rain or snow—he would wander out, climb the mountain side, or go into the woodland to pray. All about him the great trees murmured, their branches swayed in the wind, there were the thousand sounds of woodland life, and often at night, when he lay between sleeping and waking, he thought he heard voices speaking to him. Angel voices they were, and he heard distinctly: "Thou doest well to fast; thou shalt soon return to thy native land." One night there came the message, "Behold thy ship is ready." The words rang in his ear: "Thy ship is ready."

Nearly two hundred miles off there was a seaport, and without hesitation Patrick rose to go thither. It was a long, dark way through the dreary wood; the road was beset with dangers; he knew that he might be caught by messengers sent after him by Miliucc, or that he might fall into the hands of another master. In "The Confession" he says that a higher will than his own guided him. He walked through the pathless wood, and no evil befel him. Angels were about him; angels invisible to mortal eyes, he says, stretched their white wings and guarded him, for his faith was equal to that of Abraham, who without question had set out for a strange land. When Patrick reached the port, there, as the angels had told him, was his dream ship, waiting; its sails were up, it was



He walked through the pathless wood, and no evil befel him

ST PATRICK

about to start. He had no money but he boldly went forward to ask the sailors to take him on board, promising that he would work his passage to whatever port they were bound for. But the shipmaster would not listen to him ; he gruffly said, " Nay ; in no wise shalt thou come with us."

Patrick turned away with sorrow in his heart, and as he turned he prayed, and his prayer was answered, for he was called back to the ship. The sailors had prevailed on the master to take him in, and immediately they set sail, and Patrick was carried away from the shores of Ireland.

The voyage lasted three days, at the end of which Patrick and his companions landed in Gaul. They went by remote ways to avoid the robbers that infested the highways, and at last their provisions were exhausted. But Patrick's heart was light, the faith burnt clear in his soul, and he prayed and sang aloud. One day, in the third week, it is said, they were all faint from hunger, and one of the company turned to Patrick and asked, " Why dost thou not pray to thy God for us, who are nigh to die of starvation ? "

" I will ! " cried Patrick boldly ; " nothing is impossible to the Lord my God."

And he prayed with a loud voice, asking that food should be given to them in their extremity, and as he prayed a drove of swine appeared on the road, and the wayfarers killed some, ate, and were refreshed. From that hour Patrick was looked upon as a holy man. In company with his friends he travelled for one week more, and then they came to a place where men dwelt. Patrick heard again the voice that spoke to him in the night : " Thou shalt remain two months " ; and at

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

the end of the two months he rose and went forth alone.

“The fear of God was my guide,” he used to tell his disciples in after years, when he was speaking of that time. He journeyed until he came to the south of France, and in the blue waters of the Mediterranean he saw an island where there was a monastery, and where the monks dwelt in meditation and study. And Patrick went to them, and for some years remained with them in seclusion, leading a life of work and prayer. He was at peace, withdrawn from the world, in close communion with the spiritual world. There came a time, however, when a longing for Britain, the home of his childhood, came upon him and would not be denied. He found that many of his kinsfolk were dead, but some still survived; they welcomed him warmly, and begged him never to leave them. One night, Patrick tells us, he had a dream: he saw coming towards him one he knew, who carried a bundle of letters, of which he gave to Patrick one bearing the inscription: “The voice of the Irish people.” As he read this letter Patrick heard once again the sounds of the great forest, the rustling of innumerable leaves, the swaying of the branches in the wind, the stir of a thousand invisible lives; and mingled with them was the far-away echo of voices raised in petition: “Come to us, holy youth, and walk with us once more.”

Patrick woke and was glad that it was but a dream, for his heart was bitter against Ireland, the land of his shame. But, wherever he went, he was pursued by the voices crying to him through the turmoil of the forest, “Come to us! come to us!” He prayed to be

ST PATRICK

delivered, but suddenly all was made clear to him : why he was taken into slavery in Ireland, why God had talked to him as he watched his master's flocks, why he had escaped, guarded by the high angels, and taken ship, and the reason for his sojourn in the monastery. He saw it all now ; he knew that little by little he had been prepared for his life's mission of bringing the gospel to the people of Ireland.

Space will not allow me to tell you all that Patrick did in Ireland : how he fought against the worship of Baal ; how he built churches ; how he persuaded the people that his God was a good God, who had dominion over all powers.

The people flocked to hear him from all sides, and once, when they asked him concerning the mystery of the Trinity, he took a humble trefoil that grew close to the ground and showed it to them, pointing out how its one leaf consisted of three leaves, and yet it was not three leaves but one leaf. And the modest plant became the national emblem ; and the shamrock was exalted above all other plants. Patrick was made Bishop of Armagh, and all the kings and men of all the tribes of Ireland came to show him honour, and to be converted ; even the King of Tara came, the high King of Ireland, to whom all the other kings in the land did homage.

Patrick was a man of strong personality, of surpassing fervour, impulsive, easily moved, given to sudden fits of anger ; he loved the people, he loved God, and the Irish love him and remember him to this day.

In his old age Patrick, as " The Confessions " show, loved to meditate on the wonderful ways of God in dealing with him. We think of the brave old saint sitting in his cell and writing, full of amazement as he

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

recalled the circumstances of his life; it was marvellous to him that the shepherd boy recognised the voice that spoke to him, and that from the first his faith never wavered.

O marvel of faith ; would that every boy and girl might learn to distinguish the voices that speak in their hearts, and, having recognised the divine voice, learn to trust it as St Patrick did.

When the time came for him to die, Patrick, says the legend, was warned by an angel that the end of his days was at hand. He was at that time living at Saul, a town in Ulster. He had longed with a great longing to be buried at Armagh, the place he loved beyond all others, and, when the heavenly messenger warned him that his hour had come, he rose to go to the See he had founded. It was early spring, and, as he went forth, strange sights greeted him, the trees seemed to be on fire, the heavens to be opened, troops of angels were about him. He walked stumbling as one in a dream, when suddenly one of the angels bade him return to Saul; he must not be buried at Armagh. Without a word Patrick obeyed ; he returned to his little cell, and having taken the sacrament, his spirit went to be with God. It was the 17th of March 459 A.D. And men wove sweet legends about him. They said that they saw angels guarding his body ; that the room in which he lay was full of sweet odours of roses ; that there was no night for twelve days after his death. This is the story of St Patrick, the titular saint of Ireland, the green isle from which the Saxons were to receive the light of Christianity.



ONE of the most romantic episodes in the annals of the early Christian Church is recorded in the life of St Germanus, who visited England in 429, accompanied by St Lupus of Troy. The two bishops visited the converts in the valley of the Dee and found that they were in terror of the Picts and Scots who had overrun the district. Germanus was accustomed to war and was easily persuaded to aid the converts against the heathen. First he baptised a host of penitents on Easter Sunday, and on the following day word was brought that the enemy was approaching. Germanus skilfully stationed his followers in a rocky gorge which commanded the path along which the Picts and Scots would come. They marched carelessly, expecting no serious opposition, and suddenly they caught sight of a man holding a British flag. It was Germanus, who had told his people to do as he bade them and to trust in God. With a loud voice he cried: "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" The next moment the cry was echoed by a thousand other voices and the strange sound was full of menace. It seemed to fall from

THE DAWN OF BRITISH HISTORY

heaven, it resounded on all sides, the very rocks seemed to shout it out at the strangers who disturbed their ancient peace.

The barbarians were terrified to hear the unearthly sound coming from what they had thought to be a deserted wilderness. "The enemy was panic stricken," wrote the Venerable Bede, "fearing not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very frame of heaven above them ; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to save them. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, well satisfied if, even with unprotected bodies, they could escape the danger. Many of them, flying headlong in their fear, were engulfed by the river which they had crossed. The Britons, without a blow, inactive spectators of the victory they had gained, beheld their vengeance complete."

This has been called the Hallelujah Victory and with the record of it our story must come to an end. We have seen Britain gradually emerging from the darkness, and we have roughly traced the beginning of our island-story. Different races have come and gone, each doing its allotted part. We found Britain an isolated land, the home of primitive and ignorant tribesmen, without cohesion or national spirit, and we leave her still dis-united, but conscious of her weakness and of the superior power and knowledge of outside races. The people have learnt much from the Romans. They have learnt to make roads, to drain swamps, to erect fortifications, to build houses. They have been taught by bitter experience that the battle is not only to the strong and brave, but that an army must obey its leaders and fight together as a great machine. Unfortunately the

THE HALLELUJAH VICTORY

Britons have not learnt how to rule. Four hundred years of subjection to the Romans have crushed the free spirit which Julius Caesar found it so difficult to quell, and now that the Romans have gone the people are without great leaders. Mighty sorrows have yet to afflict the land ere that great nation is born whom later ages will know by the name of England.

“ Each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.”



THE END

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Herodotus mentions Britain in his work . . .	about B.C.	450
Aristotle refers to Albion and Ierne . . .	„ „	350
Voyage of Pytheas to Britain . . .	„ „	320
Polybius mentions Britain . . .	„ „	260
First invasion of the Romans under Julius Caesar	„	55
Second invasion of the Romans under Julius Caesar	„	54
Third invasion of the Romans under Aulus Plautius	A.D.	43
Caractacus defeated and carried in chains to Rome	„	51
Defeat of Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni . . .	„	61
Agricola massacres the Druids in Anglesea, subdues the Britons, and defeats Gal- gacus, the chieftain of the Caledonians . . .	„	78-84
The Emperor Hadrian visits Britain and builds the wall from the Tyne to the Solway	„	121
The Emperor Severus visits Britain, builds a wall from the Forth to the Clyde, and dies at York	„	208-211
Carausius usurps the throne of Britain . . .	„	286
The Emperor Constantine recovers Britain . . .	„	296
Martyrdom of Saint Alban	„	304
The Romans under Theodosius defeat the Picts and Scots and relieve London . . .	„	368
The Romans withdraw their troops from Britain	„	410-418

*The following are amongst the Books consulted in the
Preparation of this little Book :—*

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Green, J. R.—"The Making of England."
Elton, C. I.—"Origins of English History."
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Caesar."
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Smith, Sir Cecil—A Guide to the Exhibition illustrating Greek and Roman Life, British Museum.
Catalogue of Antiquities in the Guildhall Museum, issued under the direction of the “Library Committee of the Corporation of the City of London.”

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